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THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JONATHAN SWIFT, D. D

DEAN OF ST. PATRICK'S, DUBLIN.

ARRANGED BY

THOMAS SHERIDAN, A. M.

WITH

NOTES, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL.

A NEW EDITION, IN TWENTY-FOUR VOLUMES.

CORRECTED AND REVISED

BY JOHN NICHOLS, F. A. S.

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TRACTS

RELATIVE

TO IRELAND.

A LETTER

TO A

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

IN IRELAND,

UPON CHOOSING A NEW SPEAKER THERE, 1708.

SIR,

YOU may easily believe I am not at all surprised at what you tell me, since it is but a confirmation of my own conjecture that I sent you last week, and made you my reproaches upon at a venture. It looks exceedingly strange, yet I believe it to be a great truth, that in order to carry a point in your house, the two following circumstances are of great advantage: first, to have an ill cause; and, secondly, to be a minority. For both these circumstances are extremely apt to invite men, to make them assiduous in their attendance, watchful of opportunities, zealous for gaining over proselytes, and often successful; which is not to be wondered at, when favour and interest are on the side of their opinion. Whereas, on the contrary, a majority with a good cause are negligent and supine. They think it sufficient to declare themselves upon opinion in favour of their party; but, sailing against the tide of favour and preferment, they are easily scattered and driven back. In short, they want a common principle to cement, and motive to spirit them: for, the bare acting upon a principle from the dictates of a good conscience, or prospect of serving the

public, will not go very far, under the present dispositions of mankind. This was amply verified last session of parliament, upon occasion of the money bill, the merits of which I shall not pretend to examine. It is enough, that upon the first news of its transmission hither, in the form in which it afterward appeared, the members, upon discourse with their friends, seemed unanimous against it; I mean those of both parties, except a few, who were looked upon as persons ready to go any lengths prescribed them by the court. Yet, with only a weak canvassing among a very few hands, the bill passed, after a full debate, by a very great majority. Yet, I believe, you will hardly attempt persuading me, or any body else, that one man in ten, of those who changed their language, were moved by reasons any way affecting the merits of the cause, but merely through hope, fear, indolence, or good manners. Nay, I have been assured from good hands, that there was still a number sufficient to make a majority against the bill, if they had not apprehended the other side to be secure; and therefore thought it imprudence, by declaring themselves, to disoblige the government, to no purpose.

Reflecting upon this, and forty other passages, in the several houses of commons since the revolution, makes me apt to think, there is nothing a chief governor can be commanded to attempt here, wherein he may not succeed, with a very competent share of address, and with such assistance, as he will always find ready at his devotion. And therefore I repeat what I said at first, that I am not at all surprised at what you tell me. For, if there had been the least spark of public spirit left, those who wished well to their country, and its constitution in church and state, should, upon the first news of the late speaker's promotion (and you and I know it might have been done a great deal sooner) have immediately gone

together, and consulted about the fittest person to succeed him. But, by all I can comprehend, you have been so far from proceeding thus, that it hardly ever came into any of your heads. And the reason you give, is the worst in the world: That none offered themselves, and you knew not whom to pitch upon. It seems, however, the other party was more resolved, or at least not so modest: for, you say, your vote is engaged against your opinion, and several gentlemen in my neighbourhood tell me the same story of themselves. This, I confess, is of an unusual strain, and a good many steps below any condescensions a court will, I hope, ever require from you. I shall not trouble myself to inquire who is the person, for whom you and others are engaged, or whether there be more candidates from that side than one. You tell me nothing of either; and I never thought it worth the question to any body else. But, in so weighty an affair, and against your judgment, I cannot look upon you as irrecoverably determined. Therefore I desire you will give me leave to reason with you a little upon the subject; lest your compliance, or inadvertency, should put you upon what you may have cause to repent of, as long as you live.

You know very well, the great business of the high flying whigs, at this juncture, is to endeavour a repeal of the test clause. You know likewise that the moderate men, both of high and low church, profess to be wholly averse from this design, as thinking it beneath the policy of common gardeners, to cut down the only hedge that shelters from the north. Now I will put the case: If the person to whom you have promised your vote, be one, of whom you have the least apprehension, that he will promote or assent to the repealing of that clause, whether it be decent or proper he should be the mouth of an assembly, whereof a very great majority pretend

England, those are what they are sure to be most industrious in cultivating and spreading. Agriculture, which has been the principal care of all wise nations, and for the encouragement whereof there are so many statute laws in England, we countenance so well, that the landlords are every where, by penal clauses, absolutely prohibiting their tenants from ploughing;* not satisfied to confine them within certain limitations, as is the practice of the English: one effect of which is already seen in the prodigious dearness of corn, and the importation of it from London, as the cheaper market. And because people are the riches of a country, and that our neighbours have done, and are doing, all that in them lies to make our wool a drug to us, and a monopoly to them; therefore, the politic gentlemen of Ireland have depopulated vast tracts of the best land, for the feeding of sheep.

I could fill a volume as large as the history of the wise men of Gotham, with a catalogue only of some wonderful laws and customs, we have observed within thirty years past. It is true, indeed, our beneficial traffic of wool with France, has been our only support for several years, furnishing us with all the little money we have to pay our rents, and go to market. But our merchants assure me, this trade has received a great damp by the present fluctuating condition of the coin in France; that most of their wine is paid for in specie, without carrying thither any commodity from hence.

However, since we are so universally bent upon enlarging our flocks, it may be worth inquiring, what we

* It was the practice of Irish farmers to wear out their ground with ploughing, neither manuring nor letting it lie fallow; and when their leases were near expired, they ploughed even the meadows, and made such havoc, that the landlords, by their zeal to prevent it, were betrayed into this pernicious measure. F.

shall do with our wool, in case Barnstable* should be overstocked, and our French commerce should fail?

I could wish the parliament had thought fit to have suspended their regulation of church matters, and enlargements of the prerogative, until a more convenient time, because they did not appear very pressing, at least to the persons principally concerned; and, instead of these great refinements in politics and divinity, had amused themselves and their committees a little with the state of the nation. For example: what if the house of commons had thought fit to make a resolution, *nemine contradicente*, against wearing any cloth or stuff in their families, which were not of the growth and manufacture of this kingdom? What if they had extended it so far as utterly to exclude all silks, velvets, calicoes, and the whole lexicon of female fopperies; and declared, that whoever acted otherwise should be deemed and reputed an enemy to the nation? What if they had sent up such a resolution to be agreed to by the house of lords; and by their own practice and encouragement, spread the execution of it in their several counties? What if we should agree to make burying in woollen a fashion, as our neighbours have made it a law? What if the ladies would be content with Irish stuffs for the furniture of their houses, for gowns and petticoats for themselves and their daughters? Upon the whole, and to crown all the rest, let a firm resolution be taken by male and female, never to appear with one single shred that comes from England, and let all the people say, AMEN.

I hope and believe, nothing could please his majesty better, than to hear that his loyal subjects of both sexes in this kingdom celebrated his birth-day (now approach-

† A sea-port in Devonshire, at that time the principal market in England for Irish wool. F.

ing) universally clad in their own manufacture.* Is there virtue enough left in this deluded people, to save them from the brink of ruin? If the men's opinions may be taken, the ladies will look as handsome in stuffs as in brocades; and since all will be equal, there may be room enough to employ their wit and fancy, in choosing and matching patterns and colours. I heard the late archbishop of Tuam mention a pleasant observation of somebody's, that Ireland would never be happy, till a law were made for burning every thing that came from England, except their people and their coals. I must confess, that as to the former, I should not be sorry if they would stay at home; and for the latter, I hope, in a little time, we shall have no occasion for them.

Non tanti mitra est, non tanti judicis ostrum——

but I should rejoice to see a staylace from England be thought scandalous, and become a topic for censure at visits and tea-tables.

If the unthinking shopkeepers in this town had not been utterly destitute of common sense, they would have made some proposal to the parliament, with a petition to the purpose I have mentioned; promising to improve the cloths and stuffs of the nation into all possible degrees of fineness and colours, and engaging not to play the knave, according to their custom, by exacting and imposing upon the nobility and gentry, either as to the prices or the goodness. For I remember, in London, upon a general mourning, the rascally mercers and woollendrapers would in four and twenty hours raise their

* Her grace the duchess of Dorset, the lord lieutenant's lady, is said to have appeared at the Castle in Dublin wholly clad in the manufacture of Ireland, on his majesty's birth-day, 1753. F.

cloths and silks to above a double price; and if the mourning continued long, then come whining with petitions to the court, that they were ready to starve, and their fineries lay upon their hands.

I could wish our shopkeepers would immediately think on this proposal, addressing it to all persons of quality and others; but first be sure to get somebody who can write sense, to put it into form.

I think it needless to exhort the clergy to follow this good example; because in a little time, those among them, who are so unfortunate as to have had their birth and education in this country, will think themselves abundantly happy, when they can afford Irish crape, and an Athlone hat; and as to the others, I shall not presume to direct them. I have indeed seen the present archbishop of Dublin* clad from head to foot in our own manufacture; and yet, under the rose be it spoken, his grace deserves as good a gown as if he had not been born among us.

I have not courage enough to offer one syllable on this subject to their honours of the army; neither have I sufficiently considered the great importance of scarlet and gold lace.

The fable in Ovid of Arachne and Pallas is to this purpose. The goddess had heard of one Arachne, a young virgin very famous for spinning and weaving: they both met upon a trial of skill; and Pallas finding herself almost equalled in her own art, stung with rage and envy, knocked her rival down, and turned her into a spider; enjoining her to spin and weave for ever out of her own bowels, and in a very narrow compass. I confess, that from a boy I always pitied poor Arachne, and

* Dr. William King. N.

could never heartily love the goddess, on account of so cruel and unjust a sentence; which however is fully executed upon us by England, with farther additions of rigour and severity; for the greatest part of our bowels and vitals is extracted, without allowing us the liberty of spinning and weaving them.

The Scripture tells us that "oppression makes a wise man mad;" therefore, consequently speaking, the reason why some men are not mad, is because they are not wise: however it were to be wished that oppression would in time teach a little wisdom to fools.

I was much delighted with a person, who has a great estate in this kingdom, upon his complaints to me, how grievously poor England suffers by impositions from Ireland: that we convey our own wool to France, in spite of all the harpies at the custom-house: that Mr. Shuttleworth, and others on the Cheshire coasts, are such fools to sell us their bark at a good price for tanning our own hides into leather, with other enormities of the like weight and kind. To which I will venture to add more: that the mayoralty of this city is always executed by an inhabitant, and often by a native, which might as well be done by a deputy with a moderate salary, whereby poor England loses at least one thousand pounds a year upon the balance: that the governing of this kingdom costs the lord lieutenant three thousand six hundred pounds a year; so much net loss to poor England: that the people of Ireland presume to dig for coals on their own grounds; and the farmers in the county of Wicklow send their turf to the very market of Dublin, to the great discouragement of the coal trade of Mostyn and Whitehaven:* that the revenues of the post office here, so

* Mostyn in Flintshire, and Whitehaven in Cumberland. F.

righteously belonging to the English treasury, as arising chiefly from our own commerce with each other, should be remitted to London clogged with that grievous burden of exchange; and the pensions paid out of the Irish revenues to English favourites, should lie under the same disadvantage, to the great loss of the grantees. When a divine is sent over to a bishoprick here, with the hopes of five-and-twenty hundred pounds a year, and upon his arrival he finds, alas! a dreadful discount of ten or twelve per cent: a judge, or a commissioner of the revenue, has the same cause of complaint. Lastly, the ballad upon Cotter is vehemently suspected to be Irish manufacture; and yet is allowed to be sung in our open streets, under the very nose of the government.

These are a few among the many hardships we put upon that poor kingdom of England; for which, I am confident, every honest man wishes a remedy: and I hear, there is a project on foot, for transporting our best wheaten straw by sea and land carriage to Dunstable; and obliging us by a law to take off yearly so many ton of straw hats,* for the use of our women; which will be a great encouragement to the manufacture of that industrious town.

I should be glad to learn among the divines, whether a law to bind men without their own consent be obligatory *in foro conscientiæ;* because I find, Scripture, Sanderson, and Suarez, are wholly silent on the matter. The oracle of reason, the great law of nature, and general opinion of civilians, wherever they treat of limited governments, are indeed decisive enough.

It is wonderful to observe the bias among our people in favour of things, persons, and wares, of all kinds, that

* The Dean had very little idea of the amazing extent to which the manufacture of straw hats in the neighbourhood of Dunstable has been since carried. N.

come from England. The printer tells his hawkers, that he has got an excellent new song just brought from London. I have somewhat of a tendency that way myself; and upon hearing a coxcomb from thence displaying himself with great volubility upon the park, the playhouse, the opera, the gaming-ordinaries, it was apt to beget in me a kind of veneration for his parts and accomplishments. It is not many years, since I remember a person, who by his style and literature seems to have been the corrector of a hedge-press in some blind alley about Little Britain, proceed gradually to be an author, at least a translator* of a lower rate, although somewhat of a larger bulk, than any that now flourishes in Grub-street; and upon the strength of this foundation, come over here, erect himself up into an orator and politician, and lead a kingdom after him. This, I am told, was the very motive that prevailed on the author† of a play, called, 'Love in a Hollow Tree,' to do us the honour of a visit; presuming, with a very good reason, that he was a writer of a superior class. I know another, who for thirty years past has been the common standard of stupidity in England, where he was never heard a minute in any assembly, or by any party, with common Christian treatment; yet upon his arrival here, could put on a face of importance and authority, talk more than six, without either gracefulness, propriety, or meaning; and at the same time be admired and followed as the pattern of eloquence and wisdom.

Nothing has humbled me so much, or shown a greater disposition to a contemptuous treatment of Ireland, in some chief governors, than that high style of several

* Supposed to be Cæsar's Commentaries, dedicated to the Duke of Marlborough, by Colonel Bladen. H.

† Lord Grimston. H.

speeches from the throne, delivered as usual after the royal assent, in some periods of the two last reigns. Such exaggerations of the prodigious condescensions in the prince to pass those good laws, would have but an odd sound at Westminster: neither do I apprehend how any good law can pass, wherein the king's interest is not as much concerned as that of the people. I remember, after a speech on the like occasion, delivered by my Lord Wharton,† (I think it was his last) he desired Mr. Addison to ask my opinion on it: my answer was, "That his excellency had very honestly forfeited his head, on account of one paragraph; wherein he asserted, by plain consequence, a dispensing power in the queen." His lordship owned it was true, but swore "the words were put into his mouth by direct orders from court." Whence it is clear, that some ministers in those times were apt from their high elevation, to look down upon this kingdom, as if it had been one of their colonies of outcasts in America. And I observed a little of the same turn of spirit in some great men from whom I expected better; although to do them justice, it proved no kind of difficulty to make them correct their idea, whereof the whole nation quickly found the benefit. But that is forgotten. How the style has since run, I am wholly a stranger; having never seen a speech since the last of the queen.

I would now expostulate a little with our country landlords; who, by unmeasurable screwing and racking their tenants all over the kingdom, have already reduced the miserable people to a worse condition than the peasants in France, or the vassals in Germany and Poland; so that the whole species of what we call substantial farmers, will, in a very few years, be utterly at an

* Lord lieutenant. H.

end. It was pleasant to observe these gentlemen, labouring with all their might, for preventing the bishops from letting their revenues at a moderate half value, (whereby the whole order would, in an age, have been reduced to manifest beggary) at the very instant when they were every where canting* their own land upon short leases, and sacrificing their oldest tenants for a penny an acre advance. I know not how it comes to pass (and yet perhaps I know well enough) that slaves have a natural disposition to be tyrants; and that when my betters give me a kick, I am apt to revenge it with six upon my footman; although perhaps he may be an honest and diligent fellow. I have heard great divines affirm, that nothing is so likely to call down a universal judgment from Heaven upon a nation, as universal oppression; and whether this be not already verified in part, their worships the landlords are now at full leisure to consider. Whoever travels this country, and observes the face of nature, or the faces and habits and dwellings of the natives, will hardly think himself in a land, where law, religion, or common humanity is professed.

I cannot forbear saying one word upon a thing they call a bank, which I fear is projecting in this town.† I never saw the proposals, nor understand any one particular of their scheme: what I wish for at present, is only a sufficient provision of hemp, and caps and bells, to distribute‡ according to the several degrees of honesty and prudence in some persons. I hear only of a monstrous sum already named; and if OTHERS do not soon hear of it too, and hear with a vengeance, then I am a gentleman

* Canting their land is letting it to the highest bidder.—Cant signifies the same as auction. F.

† This project for a bank in Ireland was soon afterward brought into parliament, and rejected. F.

‡ It should be—to 'be distributed.' S.

less sagacity, than myself, and a very few beside take
to be. And the jest will be still the better, if it be
e, as judicious persons have assured me, that one half
altogether imaginary. The matter will be likewise
ch mended, if the merchants continue to carry off our
d, and our goldsmiths to melt down our heavy silver.

AN ESSAY ON ENGLISH BUBBLES.

BY THOMAS HOPE, ESQ.

To the Right Reverend, Right Honourable, and Right Worshipful, and to the Reverend, Honourable, and Worshipful, &c. Company of Stockjobbers; whether Honest or Dishonest, Pious or Impious, Wise or otherwise, Male or Female, Young or Old, One with Another, who have suffered Depredations by the late Bubbles: Greeting.

HAVING received the following scheme from Dublin, I give you the earliest notice how you may retrieve DECUS ET TUTAMEN,* which you have sacrificed by permits in bubbles. This project is founded on a parliamentary security; besides, the Devil is in it if it can fail, since a dignitary of the church† is at the head of it. Therefore you who have subscribed to the stocking insurance, and are out at the heels, may soon appear tight about the leg; you who encourage the hemp manufacture may leave the halter to rogues, and prevent the odium of *felo de se*. Medicinal virtues are to be had without the expense and hazard of a dispensary: you may sleep without dreaming of bottles at your tail, and a looking glass shall not affright you: and, since the glass bubble proved as brittle as its ware, and broke, together with itself, the hopes

* The motto round a crown piece, which was the usual price of permits. F.

† The Dean of St. Patrick's.

of its proprietors, they may make themselves whole by subscribing to our new fund.

Here indeed may be made three very grave objections, by incredulous interested priests, ambitious citizens, and scrupulous statesmen. 1. The stocking manufactory gentlemen do not know how swearing can bring them to any probability of covering their legs anew, unless it be by the means of a pair of stocks. 2. That the hemp-snared men apprehend, that such an encouragement for oaths can tend to no other advancement, promotion, and exaltation, of their persons, than that of the gallows; the late old ordinary Paul,* having grown gray in the habit of making this accurate observation in every month's Sessions paper, "That swearing had as great a hand in the suspension of every living soul under his cure, as sabbath-breaking itself." And, 3d. That the glass-bubble-men cannot, for their lives, with the best pair of spectacles (which is the only thing left neat and whole out of all their ware,) see how they shall make any thing out of this his oath-project, supposing he should even confirm by one its goodness; an oath being, as they say, as brittle as glass, and only made to be broken.

But those incredulous priests shall not go without an answer, that will, I am sure, induce them to place a great confidence in the benefit arising from Christians, who damn themselves every hour of the day: for, while they speak of the vainness and fickleness of oaths, as an objection against our project, they little consider that this fickleness and vainness is the common practice among all the people of this sublunary world; and that, consequently, instead of being an objection against the project, is a concluding argument of the constancy and soli-

* Paul Lorraine, many years ordinary of Newgate. He died October 7, 1719. N.

dity of their sure gain by it; a never-failing argument, as he tells us, among the brethren of his cloth.

The ambitious citizens, who, from being plunged deep in the wealthy whirlpool of the South Sea, are in hopes of rising to such seats of fortune and dignity as would best suit with their mounting and aspiring hopes, may imagine that this new fund, in the sister nation, may prove a rival to theirs; and, by drawing off a multitude of subscribers, will, if it makes a flood in Ireland, cause an ebb in England. But it may be answered, that though our author avers "that this fund will vie with the South Sea," yet it will not clash with it. On the contrary, the subscribers to this must wish the increase of the South Sea (so far from being its rival,) because the multitude of people raised by it, who were plain speakers, as they were plain dealers before, must learn to swear, in order to become their clothes, and to be gentlemen *à la mode;* while those who are ruined, I mean Jobed by it, will dismiss the patience of their old pattern, swear at their condition, and curse their Maker in their distress: and so the increase of that English fund will be demonstratively an ample augmentation of the Irish one, so far will it be from being rivalled by it; so that each of them may subscribe to a fund they have their own security for augmenting.

The scrupulous statesmen (for we know that statesmen are usually very scrupulous) may object against having this project secured by votes in parliament; by reason, as they may deem it in their great wisdom, of its being an impious project, and that therefore so illustrious an assembly as the Irish Parliament ought by no means, according to the opinion of a Christian statesman, to be concerned in supporting any impious thing in the world. The way that some may take to prove it impious is, because it will tend highly to the interest of swearing. But

this I take to be plain downright sophistry, and playing upon words: if this be called the Swearing project, or the Oath-act, the increase of Swearing will be very much for the benefit and interest of Swearing; *i. e.* to the subscribers in the fund to be raised by this fruitful Swearing act, if it should be so called; but not to the Swearers themselves, who are to pay for it: so that it will be, according to this distinction, piously indeed an act for a benefit to mankind from swearing, not impiously a benefit in swearing: so that I think that argument entirely answered and defeated. Far be it from the Dean to have entered into so unchristian a project as this had been, so considered. But then these politicians (being generally, as the world knows, mighty tender of conscience) may raise these new doubts, fears, and scruples, *viz.* That it will, however, cause the subscribers to wish in their minds, for many oaths to fly about, which is a heinous crime, and to lay stratagems to try the patience of men of all sorts, to put them upon the swearing strain, in order to bring grist to their own mill, which is a crime still more enormous; and that therefore, for fear of these evil consequences, the passing of such an act is not consistent with the really extraordinary and tender conscience of a true modern politician. But, in answer to this, I think I can plead the strongest plea in nature, and that is called precedent, I think; which I take thus from the South Sea: one man, by the very nature of that subscription, must naturally pray for the temporal damnation of another man in his fortune, in order for gaining his own salvation in it; yea, even though he knows the other man's temporal damnation would be the cause of his eternal, by his swearing and despairing. Neither do I think this in casuistry any sin, because the swearing undone man is a free agent, and can choose

whether he will swear or no, any body's wishes whatsoever to the contrary notwithstanding. And in politics, I am sure, it is even a Machiavelian holy maxim, "that some men should be ruined for the good of others." Thus, I think, I have answered all the objections that can be brought against this project's coming to perfection; and proved it to be convenient to the state, of interest to the protestant church, and consonant with Christianity; nay, with the very scruples of modern squeamish statesmen.

To conclude: the laudable author of this project squares the measures of it so much according to the Scripture rule, that it may reasonably be presumed all good Christians in England will come as fast into the subscriptions for his encouragement, as they have already done throughout the kingdom of Ireland: for what greater proof could this author give of his Christianity, than, for bringing about this Swearing-act, charitably to part with his coat, and sit starving in a very thin waistcoat in his garret,* to do the corporal virtues of feeding and clothing the poor, and raising them from the cottage to the palace, by punishing the vices of the rich? What more could have been done even in the primitive times?

THOMAS HOPE.

From my House in St. Faith's
Parish, London, August 10,
1720.

P. S. For the benefit of the author, application may be made to me at the Tilt Yard Coffee-house, Whitehall.

* See the next tract, p. 29. N.

THE

SWEARER'S BANK;

OR

PARLIAMENTARY SECURITY

FOR ESTABLISHING

A NEW BANK IN IRELAND.

WHEREIN THE MEDICAL USE OF OATHS IS

CONSIDERED. 1720.

"Si Populus vult decipi, decipiatur."

"To believe every thing that is said by a certain se of men, and to doubt of nothing they relate, thougl ever so improbable," is a maxim that has contributed a much, for the time, to the support of Irish banks, as i ever did to the popish religion; and they are not onl beholden to the latter for their foundation, but the have the happiness to have the same patron saint: fo ignorance, the reputed mother of the devotion of on seems to bear the same affectionate relation to the cred of the other.

To subscribe to banks, without knowing the schem or design of them, is not unlike to some gentlemen signing addresses without knowing the contents

them: To engage in a bank that has neither act of parliament, charter, nor lands to support it, is like sending a ship to sea without a bottom; to expect a coach and six by the former, would be as ridiculous as to hope a return by the latter.

It was well known some time ago, that our banks would be included in the bubble bill; and it was believed those chimeras would necessarily vanish with the first easterly wind that should inform the town of the royal assent.

It was very mortifying to several gentlemen, who dreamed of nothing but easy chariots, on the arrival of the fatal packet, to slip out of them into their walking shoes. But should those banks, as it is vainly imagined, be so fortunate as to obtain a charter, and purchase lands; yet, on any run on them in a time of invasion, there would be so many starving proprietors, reviving their old pretensions to land and a bellyful, that the subscribers would be unwilling, upon any call, to part with their money, not knowing what might happen; so that in a rebellion, where the success was doubtful, the bank would infallibly break.

Since so many gentlemen of this town have had the courage, without any security, to appear in the same paper with a million or two; it is hoped, when they are made sensible of their safety, that they will be prevailed to trust themselves in a neat skin of parchment, with a single one.

To encourage them, the undertaker proposes the erecting of a bank on parliamentary security, and such security as no revolution or change of times can affect.

To take away all jealousy of any private view of the undertaker, he assures the world, that he is now in a

garret, in a very thin waistcoat, studying the public good; having given an undeniable pledge of his love to his country, by pawning his coat, in order to defray the expense of the press.

It is very well known, that by an act of parliament to prevent profane swearing, the person so offending, on oath made before a magistrate, forfeits a shilling, which may be levied with little difficulty.

It is almost unnecessary to mention, that this is become a pet-vice* among us; and though age renders us unfit for other vices, yet this, where it takes hold, never leaves us but with our speech.

So vast a revenue might be raised by the execution of this act, that I have often wondered, in a scarcity of funds, that methods have not been taken to make it serviceable to the public.

I dare venture to say, if this act was well executed in England, the revenue of it, applied to the navy, would make the English fleet a terror to all Europe.

It is computed by geographers, that there are two millions in this kingdom (of Ireland) of which number there may be said to be a million of swearing souls.

It is thought there may be five thousand gentlemen; every gentleman, taking one with another, may afford to swear an oath every day, which will yearly produce one million eight hundred twenty-five thousand oaths; which number of shillings makes the yearly sum of ninety-one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds.

The farmers of this kingdom, who are computed to be ten thousand, are able to spend yearly five hundred thousand oaths, which gives twenty-five thousand pounds; and it is conjectured, that from the bulk of the

* *i. e.* A favourite vice. H.

people, twenty or five-and-twenty thousand pounds may be yearly collected.

These computations are very modest, since it is evident that there is a much greater consumption of oaths in this kingdom, and consequently a much greater sum might be yearly raised.

That it may be collected with ease and regularity, it is proposed to settle informers in great towns, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, and to have riding officers in the country: and since nothing brings a greater contempt on any profession than poverty, it is determined to settle very handsome salaries on the gentlemen that are employed by the bank, that they may, by a generosity of living, reconcile men to an office, that has lain under so much scandal of late, as to be undertaken by none but curates, clerks of meeting-houses, and broken tradesmen.

It is resolved, that none shall be preferred to those employments, but persons that are notorious for being constant churchmen, and frequent communicants; whose piety will be a sufficient security for their honest and industrious execution of their office.

It is very probable, that twenty thousand pounds will be necessary, to defray all expenses of servants, salaries, &c. However, there will be the clear yearly sum of one hundred thousand pounds, which may very justly claim a million subscription.

It is determined to lay out the remaining unapplied profits, which will be very considerable, toward the erecting and maintaining of charity schools. A design so beneficial to the public, and especially to the protestant interest of this kingdom, has met with so much encouragement from several great patriots in England, that they have engaged to procure an act to secure the sole

benefit of informing, on this swearing act, to the agents and servants of this new bank. Several of my friends pretend to demonstrate, that this bank will in time vie with the South Sea company: they insist, that the army dispend as many oaths yearly as will produce one hundred thousand pounds nett.

There are computed to be one hundred pretty fellows in this town, that swear fifty oaths a head daily; some of them would think it hard to be stinted to a hundred: this very branch would produce a vast sum yearly.

The FAIRS of this kingdom will bring in a vast revenue; the oaths of a little Connaught one, as well as they could be numbered by two persons, amounted to three thousand. It is true, that it would be impossible to turn all of them into ready money; for a shilling is so great a duty on swearing, that if it was carefully exacted, the common people might as well pretend to drink wine as to swear: and an oath would be as rare among them as a clean shirt.

A servant, that I employed to accompany the militia their last muster day, had scored down, in the compass of eight hours, three hundred oaths; but, as the putting of the act in execution on those days would only fill the stocks with porters, and pawnshops with muskets and swords; and as it would be matter of great joy to papists, and disaffected persons, to see our militia swear themselves out of their guns and swords; it is resolved that no advantage shall be taken of any militia man's swearing while he is under arms; nor shall any advantage be taken of any man's swearing in the four courts, provided he is at hearing in the exchequer, or has just paid off an attorney's bill.

The medicinal use of oaths is what the undertaker would by no means discourage, especially where it is

necessary to help the lungs to throw off any distilling humour. On certificate of a course of swearing prescribed by any physician, a permit will be given to the patient, by the proper officer of the bank, paying no more than sixpence. It is expected, that a scheme of so much advantage to the public will meet with more encouragement than their chimerical banks; and the undertaker hopes, that as he has spent a considerable fortune in bringing this scheme to bear, he may have the satisfaction to see it take place, for the public good, though he should have the fate of most projectors, to be undone.

It is resolved, that no compositions shall be made, nor licenses granted, for swearing, under a notion of applying the money to pious uses; a practice so scandalous as is fit only for the see of Rome, where the money arising from whoring licences is applied *ad propagandam fidem:* and, to the shame of Smock alley, and of all protestant whores (especially those who live under the light of the Gospel-ministry) be it spoken, a whore in Rome never lies down, but she hopes it will be the means of converting some poor heathen, or heretic.

The swearing revenues of the town of Cork will be given for ever, by the bank, to the support of poor clergymen's widows; and those of Ringsend will be allowed to the maintenance of sailors' bastards.

The undertaker designs, in a few days, to appoint time and place for taking subscriptions; the subscribers must come prepared to pay down one fourth on subscribing.

P. S. The Jews of Rotterdam have offered to farm the revenues of Dublin at twenty thousands pounds per annum. Several eminent Quakers are also willing to

take them at that rent; but the undertaker has rejected their proposals, being resolved to deal with none but Christians.

Application may be made to him about them, any day, at Pat's coffee-house, where attendance will be given.

RIGHT OF PRECEDENCE BETWEEN PHYSICIANS AND CIVILIANS INQUIRED INTO.

"Tu major, tibi me est æquum parare, Menalca."—Virg.

"Fidis offendar medicis? irrascar amicis?"—Hor.

I have waited hitherto with no little impatience, to see some good effect of that debate, which I thought was happily started at a late meeting of our university,* upon the subject of precedence between professors of law and physic. And, though I cannot join in opinion with the worthy gentleman who first moved in it, I must needs say, the motion was seasonable, and well became him: for, beside that he intended an honour to a faculty he was promoted above,† and was so self-denying as to wave all debates of that nature as long as he was a party concerned in the motion, he did what in him lay to put an end, by authority, to a point in controversy, which had long divided the gentlemen of those two faculties; and I am very much mistaken if the same person does not hereafter prove as much a friend to piety and learning in his other designs, as he has been already in this, to the peace and agreement of learned men.

But, to my great disappointment, little more has been said upon the subject, since the first debate, than what has been argued in private, more for the entertainment

* Trinity College, Dublin. N.

† Some eminent civilian, probably, who had recently received preferment. N.

of single gentlemen, than the use and information of mankind. I have heard that the matter is brought to a compromise; and professors in both faculties have agreed to yield precedence to one another, according to their standing and the date of their commencement.

But this to me appears no satisfactory way of deciding a point of such importance. And, to speak freely, it is but drawing a skin over a wound, and giving it a face of a soundness; when there lies filth and purulence within, which will another time break out with more pain and greater danger.

The time is approaching, when it will be proper once more to bring this affair upon the carpet; and I am humbly of opinion, that the point is of such consequence, that it ought not to subside, as it has done of late: it should neither rest upon that slight baffle it received at its first appearance in public, nor be hushed up in silence, under the pretence of any private accommodation, which the parties concerned have since come to, for the sake of civility and good manners in company.

I am one of those who love peace upon a good foundation; and do, for that reason, no less admire truth, upon which alone a lasting peace can be founded. And, as I am qualified to introduce this matter at the next meeting of our university, and fully determined to do so, I thought it reasonable to give this friendly notice to all parties, that they study the point, and make themselves masters of it, and give it so thorough a canvassing in what manner they think fit, as to leave no room for exception and wrangling when the question comes to be solemnly debated in that assembly.

But, before I come to the merits of the cause itself, you must give me leave to make one observation in the way, concerning the importance of precedence in gene-

ral; which may prove of singular use to mankind, who are for the most part unapprised of it.

As I remember, there fell a very harsh expression from a certain gentleman (with whom it is not usual to be unguarded) who appeared an advocate for physicians, when the motion was first made to thrust them from their place. He was pleased to call it a womanish debate, if I took him right; but, as much a friend as I am to his person and cause, I will not follow him in that opinion; and will farther say, the expression was mean, and beneath the dignity of his character. There is an unkind reflection couched in it upon a sex, by which much of the decencies of life and little morals are supported; and it does not agree with that taste of gallantry which he is thought to have, and is very consistent with his profession; and is even ungrateful in a man of that faculty, which is more in favour with the ladies than any other except divinity.

But, not to insist upon this, I cannot think as that expression implies, that the matter is at all beneath the consideration of the greatest and most learned of men. On the contrary, I think the question was well moved; and, since it has been moved, every one should endeavour to find on which side of the argument the advantage lies; and I wonder that in this interval of parliament and business (the usual vacation of this kingdom) something has not been offered before this time for the quieting men's minds. It is a difference among his majesty's subjects, which it becomes every healing spirit to compose, and is a duty both of religion and loyalty.

I would ask, is precedence, or distinction of place, of no moment among men? Are women only concerned in it? Does society owe nothing of conveniency to it? Is it indifferent, whether a man sits at a lady's elbow, or her pert chaplain's? near a soup at the head of the ta-

ble, or beef at the bottom? Is there no advantage in the first plate, or the earliest compliment of the glass, or the respect of waiters, or in ruling the books at a quarter sessions, and being honoured with the cushion in the face of one's country? It is of no consequence to be in the eye of the government? and does not precedence contribute to that at a Tholsel* entertainment? What are academical degrees so dearly purchased for, but place; and can a professor answer it to his trust or interest, to disparage precedence? For what other reason in nature but precedence, did a great man of my acquaintance lately become a double grand compounder for his degree? and another, undeceive mankind, or rather deceive women, and suffer himself to be pronounced a venerable man in spite of his youthful looks? Shall not the solemn Doctor —— in his chariot take place of plain Mr. —— in his? and have the heels of him in preferment, according to the start he has in precedence?

Give me leave to say, that the notion of the insignificancy of place has been of infinite prejudice to many worthy men, and of as great advantage to others, who have juster thoughts of it. While dignity sinks with its own weight, the scum of mankind will naturally rise above it.

I have a pious concern upon me for all the important mistakes of mankind, and this among the rest; as to which, I have observed strong prejudice runs counter to the nature of things, and the principles of truth and reason. Sure I am, nature directs every person and thing to maintain its situation, or rather not so much to keep its own place, as to aspire and displace others. And the reason is plain, because that is a tendency to the uppermost point, and an approach to perfection; and, there-

* Where the corporation of Dublin hold their meetings. N.

fore, contrary to common opinions, I have ever thought there is piety in pride and ambition, and that it is virtue to be emulous and aspiring. And when I hear, as in my time I have many, conceited declamations against pride; I suspect it is with the design of a monopoly, and to engross it; as I have known an ingenious schoolboy spit in his mess of porridge, not to abuse the good creature, but to secure it all to himself.* What is that dominion so early given to mankind, but superiority of power and place? and then to act up to it, is not womanish, but manly. And if that was a precept, I will take upon me to say, there is not one point of duty so universally and exactly observed.

And society has so great a consideration of place, that we find wise provisions made for the regulating of it, and for settling the due pre-eminence of all degrees of men, and an office of heraldry for that purpose, which may be found in almost every house of quality. I could go farther than this, but for this reason, that it is out of my way, and none of my business, to determine the force of great examples, and make conclusions upon Scripture; and perhaps my friend's best apology is, that the Bible is out of the road of his profession and study; but I will say thus much, that as I have observed divines to be so far scriptural in their carriages, as to take "the right hand of fellowship" on all occasions, and carry their disputes about place as high as any other sort of men; so their practice (such is my deference) is to me the best gloss upon duty, and my conviction, and should be his. And this plainly determines the point against him, and shows the importance of precedence; and then it will follow in logic, that, if taking place be matter of

* The same thought (not an over delicate one, it must be owned) occurs in the close of our author's Epistle to Mr. Gay. N.

moment, to dispute about place is not womanish or trivial.

And, this allowed, I am inclined to believe, that, upon this religious principle, all our late promotions of nobility have proceeded; and that so many gentlemen have procured themselves titles, not, as some have injuriously thought, that they might take place of their betters, but out of a sense of duty; and while some (alas! too many) ignorantly despise them for their worthless ambition, I regard them with another eye, and honour them for their piety, and courage, and conscience, and even condescension in being made great; and do from my heart pity such as cannot be greater, without being less. Indeed the roll of our nobility is at present very voluminous; but no matter for that. If there were more of them, such is the ductility of my respects, I could, with a smaller quantity of esteem, do honour to them all. I make the same account of nobility of all dates, as I do of books; I value the old, as usually more exact, and genuine, and useful, though commonly unlettered, and often loose in the bindings; and I value the new, because——but the notion is obvious, and I leave my reader to pursue it. I was led into this comparison from the *curioso felicitas* of those, whose way it is to paste their arms and titles of honour on the reverse of the title pages, which shows the affinity of the two. My love to the nobility has made me sometimes seriously lament the great damp which must have fallen on honour and laudable ambition, had the peerage bill succeeded in England; but I had this consolation, that, had the sluice been shut there, the flood of honour had risen the higher here,* and overflowed this my native kingdom.

* In Ireland. N.

I could here, according to custom, produce, in favour of this uncommon position, many bright authorities; and have now before me above a score of quotations, gathered with infinite labour from St. Chrysostom, by his index; but, to the discouragement of my learning, the Greek types are not ready, and will not be set till the twentieth of next month, when the following editions of this work shall be enriched with learned languages, in great variety. The author of a late state sermon should have waited as I do, rather than suffer his learning to look asquint as it does, and make so frightful a figure from the press. I am master of the stochastic art; and by virtue of that I divine, that those Greek words in that discourse have crept from the margin into the text, otherwise than the author intended; and indeed some of those Greek maggots are so uneasy in, and ashamed of, their place, that they seem to be upon the crawl backward.

I hope what has been offered will clear this case of conscience, and is sufficient to show any man of candour, and who loves and searches after truth as I do, the importance of place and precedency among men; that the peace, and order, and honour, of society is owing to it: and, as women have been remarkably strenuous in asserting these rights, I do hereby take upon me to return them the thanks of mankind (asking pardon for the professor's misbehaviour,) and do wish them perseverance and success in all their laudable attempts of that nature. Let them enjoy the wall and the right hand of us from this day forward: not in consideration of their weakness, or out of our courtesy, but in their own right, as patriots, and stout defenders of the privileges of their own and our sex.

But to proceed. It were perhaps a proper method, in this, as in other debates concerning precedency, to

appeal to the herald's office, and be determined by usual and stated rules there, how place in this case is to be given or taken; but a certain lord has assured me upon his honour, that nothing concerning the present question is there taken notice of; and whatever orders may be delivered in heraldry about personal precedence, there is nothing said as to faculties, except only this, that doctors in divinity, and those not specialists, as we use to call them, i. e. such as have received that degree by the special indulgence and undeserved favour and grace of the university, shall have a place immediately above esquires that are not of noble families.

Upon which observation, if it be true, as I fear it is, I have reason to apprehend some disturbance in the country, among the ladies there; therefore I do present my most humble service to madam ——, wife to a very reverend divine, D. D. *speciali gratiâ*, who has of many years past, to my knowledge, in mistake of her husband's right, taken place at table of a certain justice of the peace's lady; and do advise her, that, in order to maintain her precedency, she would once more send her spouse up to a commencement, and engage him to perform his acts, and be readmitted, and take up his large cautionary bonds, for her own and her children's advantage.

And I would farther observe, for the use of men who love place, without a title to it either by law or heraldry; as some have a strange oiliness of spirit, which carries them upward, and mounts them to the top of all company (company being often like bottled liquors, where the light and windy parts hurry to the head, and fix in froth)—I would observe, I say, that there is a secret way of taking place without sensible precedence, and consequently without offence. This is a useful secret; and I will publish it here, from my own practice, for the be-

nefit of my countrymen, and the universal improvement of mankind.

It is this. I generally fix a sort of first meridian in my thoughts before I sit down: and, instead of observing privately, as the way is, whom in company I may sit above, in point of birth, age, fortune, or station; I consider only the situation of the table by the points in the compass, and the nearer I can get to the east (which is a point of honour for many reasons, for "*porrecta majestas ad ortum solis*") I am so much the higher; and my good fortune is to sit sometimes, or for the most part, due east, sometimes N. by E. seldom with greater variation; and then I do myself honour, and am blessed with invisible precedence, mystical to others; and the joke is, that by this means I take place (for place is but fancy) of many that sit above me; and while most people in company look upon me as a modest man, I know myself to be a very assuming fellow, and do often look down with contempt on some at the upper end of the table. By this craft I at once gratify my humour (which is pride,) and preserve my character; and this I take to be the art of life. And, sticking to this rule, I generally possess a middle place in company, even in the vulgar account, and am at meat, as wise men would be in the world,

*Extremi primorum, extremis usque priores.**
HOR. 2 Ep. ii. 204.

And, to this purpose, my way is to carry a little pocket compass in my left fob, and from that I take my measures imperceptibly, as from a watch, in the usual way of comparing time before dinner; or, if I chance to forget

* "Behind the first, yet still before the last." DUNCOMBE.

that, I consider the situation of the parish church, and this is my never failing regulator.

I know some people take another way for this, and place themselves nearest the dish they like best; and their ambition is gratified where their appetite is so. Eating well is commonly, and with justice, called good living; and their rule is that of Horace,

Ut quocunque loco fueris, vixisse libenter
*Te dicas**—— 1 Ep. xi. 24.

And it must be allowed, as a standard, their honour lies in their stomach; as indeed I have always thought that, contrary to vulgar notions, the seat, not of honour only, but of most great qualities of the mind, as well as of the disorders of the body.

Give me leave to explain myself. I think I can reduce to this one principle all the properties of the mind; and, by the way, as I take our grand devourer of fire to have the best stomach of any man living, I conclude him the greatest person our age or any other has produced, not excepting Cato's daughter; nor shall time, although *edax rerum*, ever digest the memory of one who has a better appetite than even time itself. But to go on: Does not the stomach make men ambitious, covetous, amorous, obsequious, and time-serving? What made a certain judge keep his place on the bench when his brethren left it, but his sense of honour; i. e. his keen appetite? Does not the stomach alone carry all debates in both houses, and support parties, and make court-parasites lose their dinners sometimes, that they and theirs may dine the better all their lives after?

* "Seize on the present joy, and thus possess,
Where'er you live, an inward happiness." FRANCIS.

Do not we use to say a man of honour stomachs an indignity? Is not English feeding the foundation of English bravery? and good claret, of *fierté* and French sprightliness?

In short, courage, honour, wit, and sense, and all arts and sciences, take their rise here; and this an ancient has observed, "*magister artis ingeniique largitor venter:*" which, if it be true, I will take upon me to declare our vulgar saying, "that men have guts in their brains," is a vulgar error, and should be rectified, and that rather their brains are in their guts; and when we see some men less courageous, witty, or learned, than others, we should pity their bad stomachs or indigestion, rather than their incapacity or indisposition of brain: I am so sensible of this, that I have of many years disused, as an absurdity, that saying to a simple fellow, "God help your head!" but I wish him, with more propriety, a good stomach, or a better dinner.

I could here chemico-mechanically resolve men's parts into their feeding, and show what sort of humours and genius must necessarily proceed from particular sorts of meats, and explain a great deal of the heathen mythology by it; but this I reserve for a treatise by itself. Yet this I will say, that a writer's stomach, appetite, and victuals, may be judged from his method, style, and subject, as certainly as if you were his mess-fellow, and sat at table with him. Hence we call a subject dry, a writer insipid, notions crude and indigested, a pamphlet empty or hungry, a style *jejune*, and many such like expressions, plainly alluding to the diet of an author; and I make no manner of doubt but Tully grounded that saying of "*helluo librorum*" upon the same observation.

Now, I say, it is evident, if this be true, that every man at meat is most honoured when he is most humour-

ed, or when he sits nearest to that which pleases his palate best; and consequently that is the first place to him upon that principle, and such men must be allowed to have the truest taste of honour of all others. I have observed, these sort of people have generally a great propensity to roast beef; and it will be granted, that to sit even at the foot of the table next a surloin, which is a dish of dignity, and of old hereditary knighthood, is, in strictness of heraldry, more honourable than a place next the biggest plain country squire at the upper end; and I have often chosen it.

But to return from this useful digression: The noble personage aforementioned, who honoured me with his sentiments upon this abstruse point, must be allowed to have as good a local memory as any lord in the kingdom; and has never been known once to mistake, or forget, or recede from, that place of distinction which is due to him. He could settle the forms of a royal interment, and adjust the ceremonies of a coronation, if occasion were; and I must add, but that he has more honour than to be officious, he could have determined that late controverted point of an English bishop's place among ours, and had saved the house, had he been called upon, the trouble and delays of referring to the English precedents.*

I say, his lordship (who is expert in heraldry, and as communicative of that useful knowledge as becomes noble spirits) has assured me, there is no notice taken in that science of any distinction of place for learned faculties; and for mechanical ones, such as appear on collar days, or riding the franchises,† they are below the

* The dependence of the whole Irish peerage on that of Britain was a subject then in agitation. N.

† A well-known cavalcade in Dublin. N.

thoughts of a man of quality. He pretends not t know what by-laws, or private compacts of precedenc there may be between goldsmiths and grocers, vintne and shoemakers.

I have now before me a table of precedence, give me by the same noble hand, reaching down from prince of the blood to a country squire, and regardin every branch of their families in the minutest manne which I reserve for my own use, and am envious enou to deny it to the world, and the rather, that it is to b found in Mackenzie and Gwillim, and may be had fi half a crown in the office.

The case being so, there can be no other way, as conceive, of deciding a question of precedency betwe the two faculties of law and physic, but by inquiring i to their antiquity and dignity; and whichsoever of the shall appear to be most ancient and most useful to th world, I presume the world will, in justice, think t to have the greater honour for, and give the prec dence to.

I take it for granted, that priority of time, *cæteris p ribus*, gives a preference of place; and this naturally, by common consent; for that I take to be the meani of nature in most cases, viz. what is found reasonable itself, and has been always agreed to by mankind, a is confirmed by constant and uninterrupted practic and this I desire some young preachers to take good n tice of, and get by rote. I likewise, by the way, tal upon me, now I think of it, to advise a certain deac of my acquaintance, to read Doctor Cumberland* a

* This learned divine, born July 15, 1632, was educated at S Paul's School, and thence removed to Magdalen College, Cambridg He was presented to the rectory of Brampton in Northamptonshire 1657, and had the living of Alhallows in Stamford given to him in 16

through, and twice before he presumes to plead "the law of nature" in the pulpit; to learn mathematics, before he pretends to demonstrate there; to peruse Aristotle, Tacitus, and the State Tracts, before he meddles with politics; and be able to act Eteocles, before he attempts Greek quotations in his sermons. What if Jocasta or Antigone should hear a mispronunciation from the pulpit; or any other of those young Greeks who so lately did an honour to Euripides, transported their audience into Thebes, and inspired the old bachelors on the foremost bench with that παιδοποιὸν ἡδονὴν which they so handsomely represented!

I say, time gives a natural right of precedence by common consent; and hence age is honoured above youth, and by it. The very heathens thought it indecency, and a trespass in point of manners, "si juvenis seni non assurrexerit," if a young man did not rise up, and give way to an older; and the canonists, I hope, will be ingenuous enough to own, though in this argument against their brethren the civilians, that it was a rule of the primitive church, that a deacon should not sit in the presence of a presbyter. In a word, wisdom and experience, which are divine qualities, are the properties of age, and make it honourable, and youth in the want of them contemptible.

But I do not say this to mortify or discourage young men. I would not by any means have them despise themselves, for that is the ready way to be despised by others; and the consequences of contempt are fatal. For my part, I take self-conceit and opinionativeness to be of all others the most useful and profitable quality of the

From this private station he was unexpectedly elevated to the bishopric of Peterborough, May 15, 1691; and enjoyed that preferment with the highest reputation till his death, Oct. 9, 1718. N.

mind. It has, to my knowledge, made bishops, and judges, and smart writers, and pretty fellows, and pleasant companions, and good preachers.

It is a sure way of being agreeable to the ladies, who ever judge of men as they observe men do of themselves. If all men were to have the same opinion of themselves that others have of them, there would not be, out of mere shame, above two sermons next Sunday in this large city;* nor five lawyers to go through with the business of next term. Self-conceit supports the dignity of church and state; and I pronounce him an enemy to the public who is so to that.

Much less do I intend any trouble to young clergymen of the court or city by the foregoing remark; as if, because deacons of old used to stand before presbyters, that now it were fit to rise when they come in, or give the civility of the hat or wall to any rusty rum in the street; I know the inconvenience of that mistaken piece of old breeding to both parties, and think it prudently laid aside. It is respect to an old parson, not to oblige him to uncover in the cold, and unsocket his head with both hands, and so daggle his gown out of ceremony; it is the same respect to a spruce bob, to let it lie quiet and undisturbed in its hatcase. I know no reason why powder and oil should submit to grease and grayness, that a white wig should lower to hoary hair, or a brushed beaver strike to a Carolina hat with stays.

I cannot forbear here to applaud the present refinement of ecclesiastics in their habits, and say they are more primitive and regular in their dress than those of any age before them. A clergyman ought to be κοσμιος, i. e. not (as we read) of good behaviour, but well dress-

* Dublin. N.

ed, as, indeed, nothing contributes more to polite behaviour than good clothes. This is a various reading. And here I observe, for the use of young stagers in divinity, that nothing will bring them into greater repute for deep learning, than to enterprise in criticism, and adventure betimes to change the common reading of any text in the Bible. This single word is, in my opinion, enough to vindicate their silks and velvets against all the fanatics in christendom, and our own canons to back them.

It is an old observation, that piety is mostly supported by the female sex; so that whatever is agreeable to them is for the advantage of religion; and consequently the clergy should dress, in respect to the ladies, i. e. for the good of the church: and indeed I have known some of the younger sort, that could not preach with a ruffled band, or a wig out of curl; and a certain lady of my acquaintance, very religious, and who had a good taste of men, always made a judgment from the air and dress of the preacher, and never relished any doctrine that came not recommended with a scarf and a diamond ring. I am not one that "ambitiosa recidet ornamenta," would strip the young clergy, and retrench their decencies of dress; so far from it, that I wish them with all my heart greater elegance, and finer apparel. Well fare the heart of that sprightly youth, a deacon of this church, who I foresee shall first adventure to hoop his canonical coat, and border his band or shirt with mechlin lace, or a modest fringe.

But to return from this incident to my subject again (from which a vast impetuous force of wit and learning, and love of my country, have led me devious:) The nicest logicians will allow it a fair way of arguing, in all cases, to refer to things what is true as to persons; and therefore I conclude, if physic be a faculty more ancient

than that of civil law, then it literally goes before it, i. e. takes place of it; and I hope it will not be denied, that physic is as old as the occasion of it, as old, indeed, within a few days, as mankind, which can by no means be said of the other (in comparison) upstart profession, unless any one will be so hardy to affirm, there was a doctor's commons or bishop's court in Paradise. And if any man should insist to know the year and day of the rise of physic, I take him to be ignorant of religion and history, and will disdain an answer; though I could tell him not only what the first distemper was, and that epidemical, viz. a falling sickness; but also who it was that cured it; but I do not think fit to satisfy dulness and ignorance so far.

I have ever blamed St. Jerom in my heart, for indiscretion, that when some pragmatical deacons set up for equality with presbyters, he, to humble them, made presbyters equal in effect to bishops: and I could do something of the same kind in the present dispute; and show those assuming civilians, that they can with so little reason arrogate a place above physicians, or an equality with them, that, in my humble opinion, some faculties, which they have in contempt, are superior to them in point of time, which I have already proved to be the natural ground of precedency; and it is enough here but to name the excellent faculties of music and poetry, whose antiquity, I think, no man of sense or modesty will call in question.

But having mentioned poetry, I must go aside a little, to salute my worthy friend the professor* of, or (to

* Dr. Joseph Trapp was elected poetry professor in 1708, and published his lectures under the title of "Prælectiones Poeticæ;" the first volume of which is dedicated to Mr. Secretary St. John; to whose father, in the early part of his life, he had been chaplain; (and was also made chaplain to the son by Swift's recommendation; Journal

speak more properly) the reader in, that faculty in Oxford; who has befriended the world so much by his incomparable performances of that kind, especially his latest: I will own, he has taught me, and I believe some other gentlemen who had lost their Latin, the true grammatical construction of Virgil; and deserves, not our acknowledgments only, but those of Eaton and Westminster. I am sensible, construction is as necessary to the relish and use of an author, as chewing is to taste and digestion. However, I must take upon me to admonish him of one great mistake; and I know that the modesty of the man, and the good nature familiar to him, and which shines as much in his conversation, as wit and true poetry do in his works, will bear it from a friend: he has more than once, as I remember, put jasmine for sweet marjoram, the true version; but as this, and a few more, are his only variations from the letter of the original, it may well be excused; my fear is, that school-boys may come to suffer by his mistake. I dare venture to affirm, in favour of that good pot-herb, that sweet marjoram is not improper either in broth or heroics.

Though I think what has been urged is sufficient to weigh in favour of the faculty I have here espoused;

to Stella, July 17, 1712.) He had been chaplain to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland in 1711, in which year he published "A Character of the present Set of Whigs;" which Swift, who conveyed it to the printer, calls "a very scurvy piece;" see the Journal to Stella, May 14, 1711. In a short time after, he printed at Dublin, a poem on the Duke of Ormond, which was republished at London, "and the printer sold just eleven of them;" see Journal, Aug. 24, 1711. Dean Swift, having mentioned to Stella, that Trapp and Sacheverell had been to visit him, adds, "Trapp is a coxcomb, and the other is not very deep; and their judgment in things of wit and sense is miraculous!" Journal, March 17, 1711-12. He was an agreeable and pathetic preacher; and published several volumes of sermons. He died Nov. 22, 1747. N

yet, upon occasion, I could allow all this to go for nothing, and place the controversy upon another footing, and argue from the natural dignity of medicine itself, and the universal use and benefit of it to mankind: for it is well known, that physic has been always necessary to the world, and what mankind cannot be without. It has been requisite in all ages and places; which is more than can be asserted in behalf of law, either civil or canon. I do not believe they know any thing of these in China or the mogul's country; but we know they do of physic, which prevails in the east, which supplies us with great part of our *materia medica;* and no Englishman ought in gratitude to forget, that the greatest genius and honour of England was cured of a fit of the gout* by a salutary moss from the east.

But that is not all: The force of physic goes farther than the body, and is of use in relieving the mind under most of its disorders: and this I dare venture to affirm, having frequently made the experiment upon my own person with never failing success; and this I did by the direction of my worthy parish minister, who is indeed an excellent divine, and withal an able physician; and a good physician, only to be the better divine. That good man has often quieted my conscience with an emetic, has dissipated troublesome thoughts with a cordial or exhilarating drops, has cured me of a love fit by breathing a vein, and removed anger and revenge by the prescription of a draught, thence called bitter; and, in these and other instances, has convinced me, that phy-

* Sir William Temple; see his "Essay upon the Cure of the Gout," by the application of a moss called Moxa, Temple's works, 8vo. vol. iii. p. 246. N.

sic is of use to the very soul, as far as that depends on the crasis of the body:

——Mentem sanari corpus ut ægrum
Cernimus, et flecti Medicinâ posse videmus.

LUCRET.

And I am so fully persuaded of this, that I never see a wretch go to execution, but I lament that he had not been in the hands of a good physician, who would have corrected those peccant humours of his body which brought him to that untimely death.

Now, can any thing like this be pleaded in behalf of one or the other of the two laws we are dealing with, or of both together? By the way, I must observe here, that these two laws, civil and canon, are put in couples for their unluckiness, and, I think, they ought to be muzzled too. And here lies the disadvantage of the present dispute: physic, we know, is a plain simple thing: now that this single faculty, without one friend on earth to take its part and be a second, should dispute with a pair at once, is as if one poor bloodhound should engage with a couple of mastiffs; or that a man should fight a gentleman and his lackey, or with a single rapier against sword and pistol: it is very foul play, and standers by should interpose, so hard are the terms of this debate; but there is no help for it: these two fast friends can scarce be parted, and are seldom found asunder; they must rise and fall together. My Lord Bacon used to say, very familiarly, "When I rise, my a—— rises with me." I ask pardon for the rudeness of the allusion; but it is certain that the canon law is but the tail, the fag-end, or footman, of the civil, and, like vermin in rotten wood, rose in the church in the age of its corruption, and when it wanted physic to purge it.

But I am weary of proving so plain a point. To me it is clear beyond contradiction, that the antiquity and dignity of physic do give it the precedence of civil law and its friend. I could here very easily stop the mouths of ecclesiastical civilians, by an example or two of great authority; but I hope they will take the hint, and save me the trouble: and for lay-professors, I will only say, he that is not convinced, has little sense, not only of religion (perhaps that is their least consideration,) but of good manners, and loyalty, and good fellowship. The blood of the *de Medicis** flows in the best veins in Europe; and I know not how far any slight offered to the faculty may exasperate the present King of France, or the grand duke, to a resentment prejudicial to our wines, and the public peace, and the present posture of affairs. All that love their country, and right good Florence, will perceive by this on which side of the argument they ought to appear.

And now, for the universal peace of mankind, I make the following rule, to be observed by all professors in each faculty, and their understrappers: I decree, that a doctor of physic shall take place of a doctor of laws; a surgeon, of an advocate; an apothecary, of a proctor of office; and a tooth-drawer, of a register in the court. I intended this for a parallel; but here it fails me, and the lines meet.†

I shall now only observe farther, that as the case seems desperate on the side of civilians in point of reason, so I hear they have another game to play, and are for appealing to authority; as I have known a schoolboy, fairly beaten at cuffs, run with a bloody nose to com-

* See the history of the house of *Medicis*. N.

† Alluding to Dr. Sacheverell's mathematics in a sermon before the university of Oxford, wherein he makes two parallel lines meet in a centre. N.

plain to his master. I am credibly informed, there is a design on foot to bring in heads of a bill in favour of civilians, next session of parliament; but how generous that sort of proceeding is, I leave the world to judge. I am but one; and will certainly oppose any such motion in my place; though, from the number of civilians in the house, I have reason to apprehend, it will be to little purpose. The college, a true *alma mater*, has dubbed most of us doctors, and has been more wise than christian in her favours of that kind; for she has not given, hoping for nothing again.

But here I enter my protest against all designs that may any way prejudice so great and illustrious a body of men, as our college of physicians are; and I shall take care to draw out the substance of this argument, and present it, in short heads, to each member at a proper time; and not without some hopes that reason may weigh them.

In the mean time, I hope a worthy gentleman, a member of our house, will stand up on that occasion, and assert the rights of a faculty, which he has entered into, and does an honour to: it must be remembered to his credit, that, being equally skilled in physic and civil law, and, perhaps, in divinity as well as either, he chose to commence in medicine, having chiefly qualified himself for that noble faculty by repeated travels, and enriched his mind with many curious observations, which the world may, in time, expect incredible benefit from.

If any man thinks fit to reply to this argument, and rectify any mistakes in it; I desire him to preserve his temper, and debate the matter with the same coolness that I have done; that no blood may be drawn in the controversy, nor any reason given me to complain of "*civilis vulnera dextræ*." As conviction chiefly en-

gaged me on the side of physicians; so, in some measure, a sense of gratitude for a faculty, to which I owe the comforts of life, and perhaps life itself; having received from it unspeakable ease in the two inveterate distempers of the spleen and the gout.

THE

LAST SPEECH*

AND

DYING WORDS

OF

EBEN'R ELLISTON,†

Who was executed, May 2, 1722.

PUBLISHED, AT HIS DESIRE, FOR THE COMMON GOOD.

I AM now going to suffer the just punishment for my crimes, prescribed by the law of God and my country. I know it is the constant custom, that those who come to this place should have speeches made for them, and cried about in their own hearing, as they are carried to

* About the time that this speech was written, the town was much pestered with street robbers; who, in a barbarous manner, would seize on gentlemen, and take them into remote corners, and after they had robbed them, would leave them bound and gagged. It is remarkable, that this speech had so good an effect, that there have been very few robberies of that kind committed since. F.

† The parents of Ebenezer Elliston, who were rigid dissenters, had given him a good education, put him apprentice to a silk-weaver, and settled him in that profession, which he gradually exchanged for those of a fine gentleman, a gamester, and a house-breaker. F.

execution; and truly they are such speeches, that although our fraternity be an ignorant, illiterate people, they would make a man ashamed to have such nonsense and false English charged upon him, even when he is going to the gallows. They contain a pretended account of our birth and family, of the fact for which we are to die, of our sincere repentance, and a declaration of our religion. I cannot expect to avoid the same treatment with my predecessors.

However, having had an education one or two degrees better than those of my rank and profession; I have been considering, ever since my commitment, what it might be proper for me to deliver upon this occasion.

And first, I cannot say from the bottom of my heart, that I am truly sorry for the offence I have given to God and the world; but I am very much so for the bad success of my villanies, in bringing me to this untimely end; for it is plainly evident, that after having some time ago obtained a pardon from the crown, I again took up my old trade; my evil habits were so rooted in me, and I was grown so unfit for any other kind of employment. And, therefore, although, in compliance with my friends, I resolved to go to the gallows after the usual manner, kneeling, with a book in my hand, and my eyes lifted up; yet I shall feel no more devotion in my heart than I have observed in my comrades, who have been drunk among common whores the very night before their execution. I can say farther, from my own knowledge, that two of my fraternity, after they had been hanged, and wonderfully came to life and made their escapes, as it sometimes happens, proved afterward the wickedest rogues I ever knew, and so continued until they were hanged again for good and all; and yet they had the impudence at both times they went to the gallows, to

smite their breasts, and lift up their eyes to Heaven all the way.

Secondly. From the knowledge I have of my own wicked dispositions, and that of my comrades, I give it as my opinion, that nothing can be more unfortunate to the public, than the mercy of the government in ever pardoning or transporting us; unless when we betray one another, as we never fail to do, if we are sure to be well paid, and then a pardon may do good: by the same rule, that it is better to have one fox in a farm than three or four. But we generally make a shift to return after being transported, and are ten times greater rogues than before, and much more cunning. Besides, I know it by experience, that some hope we have of finding mercy when we are tried, or after we are condemned, is always a great encouragement to us.

Thirdly. Nothing is more dangerous to idle young fellows than the company of those odious common whores we frequent, and of which this town is full: these wretches put us upon all mischief to feed their lusts and extravagancies: they are ten times more bloody and cruel than men, their advice is always not to spare if we are pursued; they get drunk with us, and are common to us; and yet, if they can get any thing by it, are sure to be our betrayers.

Now, as I am a dying man, I have done something which may be of good use to the public. I have left with an honest man (and indeed the only honest man I was ever acquainted with) the names of all my wicked brethren, the present places of their abode, with a short account of the chief crimes they have committed; in many of which I have been their accomplice, and heard the rest from their own mouths: I have likewise set down the names of those we call our setters, of the wicked houses we frequent, and of those who receive and

buy our stolen goods. I have solemnly charged this honest man, and have received this promise upon oath, that whenever he hears of any rogue to be tried for robbing or housebreaking, he will look into his list, and if he finds the name there of the thief concerned, to send the whole paper to the government. Of this I here give my companions fair and public warning, and hope they will take it.

In the paper above mentioned, which I left with my friend, I have also set down the names of several gentlemen who have been robbed in Dublin streets for three years past: I have told the circumstances of those robberies; and show plainly that nothing but the want of common courage was the cause of their misfortune. I have therefore desired my friend, that whenever any gentleman happens to be robbed in the streets, he will get that relation printed and published, with the first letters of those gentlemen's names, who by their own want of bravery are like to be the cause of all the mischief of that kind which may happen for the future.

I cannot leave the world without a short description of that kind of life which I have led for some years past; and it is exactly the same with the rest of our wicked brethren.

Although we are generally so corrupted from our childhood, as to have no sense of goodness; yet something heavy always hangs about us, I know not what it is, that we are never easy till we are half drunk among our whores and companions; nor sleep sound unless we drink longer than we can stand. If we go abroad in the day, a wise man would easily find us to be rogues by our faces, we have such a suspicious, fearful, and constrained countenance; often turning back, and slinking through narrow lanes and alleys. I have never failed of knowing a brother thief by his looks, though I never

saw him before. Every man among us keeps his particular whore, who is however common to us all when we have a mind to change. When we have got a booty, if it be in money, we divide it equally among our companions, and soon squander it away on our vices in those houses that receive us; for the master and mistress, and the very tapster, go snacks: and besides, make us pay triple reckonings. If our plunder be plate, watches, rings, snuff boxes, and the like, we have customers in all quarters of the town to take them off. I have seen a tankard worth fifteen pounds sold to a fellow in —— street for twenty shillings; and a gold watch for thirty. I have set down his name, and that of several others, in the paper already mentioned. We have setters watching in corners, and by dead walls, to give us notice when a gentleman goes by; especially if he be any thing in drink. I believe in my conscience, that if an account were made of a thousand pounds in stolen goods; considering the low rates we sell them at, the bribes we must give for concealment, the extortions of alehouse reckonings, and other necessary charges, there would not remain fifty pounds clear to be divided among the robbers. And out of this we must find clothes for our whores, beside treating them from morning to night; who in requital reward us with nothing but treachery and the pox. For when our money is gone, they are every moment threatening to inform against us, if we will not go out and look for more. If any thing in this world be like Hell, as I have heard it described by our clergy, the truest picture of it must be in the back room of one of our alehouses at midnight; where a crew of robbers and their whores are met together after a booty, and are beginning to grow drunk; from which time, until they are past their senses, is such a continued horrible noise of cursing and blasphemy, lewdness, scurrility

and brutish behaviour, such roaring and confusion, such a clutter of mugs and pots at each other's heads; that Bedlam, in comparison, is a sober and orderly place. At last they all tumble from their stools and benches, and sleep away the rest of the night; and generally the landlord or his wife, or some other whore who has a stronger head than the rest, picks their pockets before they wake. The misfortune is, that we can never be easy till we are drunk; and our drunkenness constantly exposes us to be more easily betrayed and taken.

This is a short picture of the life I have led; which is more miserable than that of the poorest labourer who works for four pence a day; and yet custom is so strong, that I am confident if I could make my escape at the foot of the gallows, I should be following the same course this very evening. So that upon the whole, we ought to be looked upon as the common enemies of mankind; whose interest it is to root us out like wolves and other mischievous vermin, against which no fair play is required.

If I have done service to men in what I have said, I shall hope I have done service to God; and that will be better than a silly speech made for me full of whining and canting, which I utterly despise, and have never been used to; yet such a one I expect to have my ears tormented with as I am passing along the streets.

Good people, fare ye well; bad as I am, I leave many worse behind me. I hope you shall see me die like a man the death of a dog.

E. E.

SOME ARGUMENTS

AGAINST

ENLARGING THE POWER OF BISHOPS,

IN

LETTING LEASES.

"Mihi credite, major hæreditas venit unicuique vestrum in iisdem bonis a jure et a legibus, quam ab iis a quibus illa ipsa bona relicta sunt." CICERO pro A. Cæcina.

October 21, 1723.

IN handling this subject, I shall proceed wholly upon the supposition, that those of our party, who profess themselves members of the church established, and under the apostolical government of bishops, do desire the continuance and transmission of it to posterity, at least in as good a condition as it is at present: because, as this discourse is not calculated for dissenters of any kind, so neither will it suit the talk or sentiments of those persons, who, with the denomination of churchmen, are oppressors of the inferior clergy, and perpetually quarrelling at the great incomes of the bishops; which is a traditional cant delivered down from former times, and continued with great reason, although it be near two hundred years since almost three parts in four of the church revenues have been taken from the clergy, beside the spoils that have been gradually made ever since

of glebes and other land, by the confusion of times, the fraud of encroaching neighbours, or the power of oppressors too great to be encountered.

About the time of the reformation, many popish bishops of this kingdom, knowing they must have been soon ejected if they would not change their religion, made long leases and feefarms of great part of their lands, reserving very inconsiderable rents, sometimes only a chiefry, by a power they assumed directly contrary to many ancient canons, yet consistent enough with the common law. This trade held on for many years after the bishops became protestants; and some of their names are still remembered with infamy, on account of enriching their families by such sacrilegious alienations. By these means episcopal revenues were so low reduced, that three or four sees were often united to make a tolerable competency. For some remedy to this evil, King James the First, by a bounty that became a good Christian prince, bestowed several forfeited lands on the northern bishopricks: but in all other parts of the kingdom, the church continued still in the same distress and poverty; some of the sees hardly possessing enough to maintain a country vicar. About the middle of King Charles the First's reign, the legislature here thought fit to put a stop at least to any farther alienations; and so a law was enacted, prohibiting all bishops and other ecclesiastical corporations, from setting their lands for above the term of twenty-one years; the rent reserved to be one half of the real value of such lands at the time they were set, without which condition the lease to be void.

Soon after the restoration of King Charles the Second, the parliament taking into consideration the miserable estate of the church, certain lands, by way of augmentation, were granted to eight bishops in the act of settle-

ment, and confirmed in the act of explanation; of which bounty, as I remember, three sees were in a great measure defeated; but by what accidents it is not here of any importance to relate.

This at present is the condition of the church in Ireland, with regard to episcopal revenues: which I have thus briefly (and perhaps imperfectly) deduced for some information to those, whose thoughts do not lead them to such considerations.

By virtue of the statute already mentioned, under King Charles the First, limiting ecclesiastical bodies to the term of twenty-one years under the reserved rent of half real value, the bishops have had some share in the gradual rise of lands, without which they could not have been supported with any common decency that might become their station. It is above eighty years since the passing of that act: the see of Meath, one of the best in the kingdom, was then worth about 400*l. per annum;* the poorer ones in the same proportion. If this were their present condition, I cannot conceive how they would have been able to pay for their patents, or buy their robes: but this will certainly be the condition of their successors, if such a bill should pass, as they say is now intended, which I will suppose; and of which I believe many persons, who may give a vote for it, are not aware.

However, this is the act which is now attempted to be repealed, or at least eluded: some are for giving bishops leave to let feefarms, others would allow them to let leases for lives; and the most moderate would repeal that clause, by which the bishops are bound to let their lands at half value.

The reasons for the rise of value in lands are of two kinds. Of the first kind, are long peace and settlement after the devastations of war; plantations, improvemen

of bad soil, recovery of bogs and marshes, advancement of trade and manufactures, increase of inhabitants, encouragement of agriculture, and the like.

But there is another reason for the rise of land, more gradual, constant, and certain; which will have its effects in countries that are very far from flourishing in any of the advantages I have just mentioned: I mean the perpetual decrease in the value of gold and silver. I shall discourse upon these two different kinds, with a view toward the bill now attempted.

As to the first: I cannot see how this kingdom is at any height of improvement, while four parts in five of the plantations for thirty years past have been real disimprovements; nine in ten of the quickset hedges being ruined for want of care or skill. And as to forest trees, they being often taken out of woods, and planted in single rows on the tops of ditches, it is impossible they should grow to be of use, beauty, or shelter. Neither can it be said, that the soil of Ireland is improved to its full height, while so much lies all winter under water, and the bogs made almost desperate by the ill cutting of the turf. There has indeed been some little improvement in the manufactures of linen and woollen, although very short of perfection; but our trade was never in so low a condition: and as to agriculture, of which all wise nations have been so tender, the desolation made in the country by engrossing graziers, and the great yearly importation of corn from England, are lamentable instances under what discouragement it lies.

But, notwithstanding all these mortifications, I suppose there is no well-wisher to his country without a little hope, that in time the kingdom may be on a better foot in some of the articles abovementioned. But it would be hard, if ecclesiastical bodies should be the only persons excluded from any share in public advantages,

which yet can never happen, without a greater share of profit to their tenants: If God sends rain equally upon the just and the unjust, why should those who wait at his altars, and are instructors of the people, be cut off from partaking in the general benefits of law or of nature?

But as this way of reasoning may seem to bear a more favourable eye to the clergy, than perhaps will suit with the present disposition or fashion of the age; I shall therefore dwell more largely upon the second reason for the rise of land, which is the perpetual decrease of the value of gold and silver.

This may be observed from the course of the Roman history above two thousand years before those inexhaustible silver mines of Potosi were known. The value of an obolus, and of every other coin between the time of Romulus and that of Augustus, gradually sunk above five parts in six, as appears by several passages out of the best authors. And yet the prodigious wealth of that state did not arise from the increase of bullion in the world by the discovery of new mines, but from a much more accidental cause, which was the spreading of their conquest, and thereby importing into Rome and Italy, the riches of the East and West.

When the seat of empire was removed to Constantinople, the tide of money flowed that way without ever returning; and was scattered in Asia. But when that mighty empire was overthrown by the northern people, such a stop was put to all trade and commerce, that vast sums of money were buried, to escape the plundering of the conquerors; and what remained was carried off by those ravagers.

It were no difficult matter to compute the value of money in England during the Saxon reigns; but the monkish and other writers since the conquest, have put

the matter in a clearer light, by the several accounts they have given us of the value of corn and cattle, in years of dearth and plenty. Every one knows, that King John's whole portion, before he came to the crown, was but five thousand pounds, without a foot of land.

I have likewise seen the steward's account of an ancient noble family in England, written in Latin between three and four hundred years ago, with the several prices of wine and victuals, to confirm my observations.

I have been at the trouble of computing (as others have done) the different values of money for about four hundred years past. Henry, Duke of Lancaster, who lived about that period, founded an hospital at Leicester for a certain number of old men, charging his lands with a groat a week to each for their maintenance, which is to this day duly paid them.* In those times, a penny was equal to ten pence halfpenny and somewhat more than half a farthing in ours; which makes about eight ninths difference.

This is plain also from the old custom upon many estates in England to let for leases of lives (renewable at pleasure) where the reserved rent is usually about twelve pence a pound, which then was near the half real value: and although the fines be not fixed, yet the landlord gets all together not above three shillings in the pound of the worth of his land; and the tenants are so wedded to this custom, that if the owner suffer three lives to expire, none of them will take a lease on other conditions; or if he brings in a foreigner who will agree to pay a reasonable rent, the other tenants, by all manner

* See a particular account of this hospital in the History of Leicestershire, vol. 1. p. 329. N.

of injuries, will make that foreigner so uneasy, that he must be forced to quit the farm; as the late Earl of Bath felt by the experience of above ten thousand pounds loss.

The gradual decrease, for about two hundred years after, was not considerable, and therefore I do not rely on the account given by some historians, that Harry the Seventh left behind him eighteen hundred thousand pounds; for although the West Indies were discovered before his death, and although he had the best talents and instruments for exacting money, ever possessed by any prince since the time of Vespasian (whom he resembled in many particulars,) yet I conceive, that in his days the whole coin of England could hardly amount to such a sum. For in the reign of Philip and Mary, Sir Thomas Cokayne,* of Derbyshire, the best housekeeper of his quality in the county, allowed his lady fifty pounds a year for maintaining the family, one pound a year wages to each servant, and two pounds to the steward; as I was told by a person of quality, who had seen the original account of his economy. Now this sum of fifty pounds, added to the advantages of a large domain, might be equal to about five hundred pounds a year at present, or somewhat more than four fifths.

The great plenty of silver in England began in Queen Elizabeth's reign, when Drake and others took vast quantities of coin and bullion from the Spaniards, either upon their own American coasts, or in their return to Spain. However, so much has been imported annually from that time to this, that the value of money in England, and most parts of Europe, is sunk above one half

* Sir Thomas Cokayne, of Ashbourne, in the county of Derby, was several times high sheriff of that county, and also of Nottinghamshire. He died at an advanced age, Nov. 15, 1592, and was buried at Ashbourne. N.

within the space of a hundred years, notwithstanding the great export of silver for about eighty years past to the East Indies, from whence it never returns. But gold not being liable to the same accident, and by new discoveries growing every day more plentiful, seems in danger of becoming a drug.

This has been the progress of the value of money in former ages, and must of necessity continue so for the future, without some new invasion of Goths and Vandals, to destroy law, property, and religion, alter the very face of nature, and turn the world upside down.

I must repeat, that what I am to say upon the subject is intended only for the conviction of those among our own party, who are true lovers of the church, and would be glad it should continue, in a tolerable degree of prosperity, to the end of the world.

The church is supposed to last for ever, both in its discipline and doctrine; which is a privilege common to every petty corporation, who must likewise observe the laws of their foundation. If a gentleman's estate, which now yields him a thousand pounds a year, had been set for ever at the highest value, even in the flourishing days of King Charles the Second, would it now amount to above four or five hundred at most? What if this had happened two or three hundred years ago; would the reserved rent at this day be any more than a small chiefry? Suppose the revenues of a bishop to have been under the same circumstances: could he now be able to perform works of hospitality and charity? Thus, if the revenues of a bishop be limited to a thousand pounds a year; how will his successor be in a condition to support his station with decency, when the same denomination of money shall not answer a half, a quarter, or an eighth part of the sum? which must unavoidably

be the consequence of any bill to elude the limiting act, whereby the church was preserved from utter ruin.

The same reason holds good in all corporations whatsoever; who cannot follow a more pernicious practice than that of granting perpetuities, for which many of them smart to this day; although the leaders among them are often so stupid as not to perceive it, or sometimes so knavish as to find their private account in cheating the community.

Several colleges in Oxford were aware of this growing evil about an hundred years ago; and instead of limiting their rents to a certain sum of money, prevailed with their tenants to pay the price of so many barrels of corn, to be valued as the market went at two seasons (as I remember) in the year. For a barrel of corn is of a real intrinsic value, which gold and silver are not: and by this invention, these colleges have preserved a tolerable subsistence for their fellows and students to this day.

The present bishops will indeed be no sufferers by such a bill; because, their ages considered, they cannot expect to see any great decrease in the value of money; or at worst they can make it up in the fines, which will probably be greater than usual upon the change of leases into feefarms or lives; or without the power of obliging their tenants to a real half value. And, as I cannot well blame them for taking such advantages (considering the nature of humankind) when the question is only, whether the money shall be put into their own or another man's pocket; so they will never be excusable before God or man, if they do not to their death oppose, declare, and protest against any such bill, as must in its consequences complete the ruin of the church, and of their own order in this kingdom.

If the fortune of a private person be diminished by the weakness, or inadvertency of his ancestors, in letting

leases for ever at low rents, the world lies open to his industry for purchasing more: but the church is barred by a dead hand; or, if it were otherwise, yet the custom of making bequests to it has been out of practice for almost two hundred years, and a great deal directly contrary has been its fortune.

I have been assured by a person of some consequence, to whom I am likewise obliged for the account of some other facts already related, that the late Bishop of Salisbury* (the greatest whig of that bench in his days) confessed to him, that the liberty which bishops in England have of letting leases for lives, would, in his opinion, be one day the ruin of episcopacy there; and thought the church in this kingdom happy by the limitation act.

And have we not already found the effect of this different proceeding in both kingdoms? have not two English prelates quitted their peerage and seats in parliament, in a nation of freedom, for the sake of a more ample revenue even in this unhappy kingdom, rather than lie under the mortification of living below their dignity at home? for which however they cannot be justly censured. I know indeed some persons, who offer as an argument for repealing the limiting bill, that it may in future ages prevent the practice of providing this kingdom with bishops from England, when the only temptation will be removed. And they allege, that as things have gone for some years past, gentlemen will grow discouraged from sending their sons to the university, and from suffering them to enter into holy orders, when they are likely to languish under a curacy or small vicarage to the end of their lives: but this is all a vain imagination; for the decrease in the value of money will equally affect both kingdoms: and besides, when bishoprics here grow

* Dr. Burnet. H.

too small to invite over men of credit and consequence, they will be left more fully to the disposal of a chief governor, who can never fail of some worthless illiterate chaplain, fond of a title and precedence. Thus will that whole bench, in an age or two, be composed of mean, ignorant, fawning gownmen, humble suppliants and dependants upon the court for a morsel of bread, and ready to serve every turn that shall be demanded from them, in hopes of getting some *commendum* tacked to their sees; which must then be the trade, as it is now too much in England, to the great discouragement of the inferior clergy. Neither is that practice without example among us.

It is now about eighty-five years since the passing of that limiting act, and there is but one instance in the memory of man, of a bishop's lease broken upon the plea of not being statutable; which, in every body's opinion, could have been lost by no other person than he* who was than tenant, and happened to be very ungracious in his county. In the present bishop of Meath's† case, that plea did not avail, although the lease were‡ notoriously unstatutable; the rent reserved being, as I have been told, not a seventh part of the real value; yet the jury, upon their oaths, very gravely found it to be according to the statute; and one of them was heard to say, that he would eat his shoes before he would give a verdict for the bishop. A very few more have made the same attempt with as little success. Every bishop, and other ecclesiastical body, reckon forty pounds in a hundred to be a reasonable half value; or if it be only a third part,

* This should be *him*, not *he*; which will be immediately manifest by restoring the preposition here omitted; as thus—'could have been lost by no other person than by *him* who was,' &c. S.

† Dr. John Evans, bishop of Meath, 1715—1724. N.

‡ This should be—'although the lease *was*'—not *were*. S.

it seldom or never breeds any difference between landlord and tenant. But when the rent is from five to nine or ten parts less than the worth, the bishop, if he consults the good of his see, will be apt to expostulate; and the tenant, if he be an honest man, will have some regard to the reasonableness and justice of the demand, so as to yield to a moderate advancement, rather than engage in a suit, where law and equity are directly against him. By these means the bishops have been so true to their trusts, as to procure some small share in the advancement of rents; although it be notorious that they do not receive the third penny (fines included) of the real value of their lands throughout the kingdom.

I was never able to imagine what inconvenience could accrue to the public, by one or two thousand pounds a year in the hands of a protestant bishop, any more than of a lay person.* The former, generally speaking, lives as piously and hospitably as the other; pays his debts as honestly, and spends as much of his revenue among his tenants: besides, if they be his immediate tenants, you may distinguish them at first sight by their habits and horses; or, if you go to their houses, by their comfortable way of living. But the misfortune is, that such immediate tenants, generally speaking, have others under them, and so a third and fourth in subordination, till it comes to the welder (as they call him) who sits at a rackrent, and lives as miserably as an Irish farmer upon a new lease from a lay landlord. But, suppose a bishop happens to be avaricious (as being composed of the same stuff with other men) the consequence to the public is no worse than if he were a squire;

* This part of the paragraph is to be applied to the period when the whole was written, which was in 1723, when several of Queen Ann's bishops were living. H.

for he leaves his fortune to his son, or near relation, who, if he be rich enough, will never think of entering into the church.

And as there can be no disadvantage to the public in a protestant country, that a man should hold lands as a bishop, any more than if he were a temporal person; so it is of great advantage to the community, where a bishop lives as he ought to do. He is bound in conscience to reside in his diocese, and by a solemn promise to keep hospitality; his estate is spent in the kingdom, not remitted to England; he keeps the clergy to their duty, and is an example of virtue both to them and the people. Suppose him an ill man; yet his very character will withhold him from any great or open exorbitancies. But in fact it must be allowed, that some bishops of this kingdom, within twenty years past, have done very signal and lasting acts of public charity; great instances whereof are the late* and present† primate, and the lord archbishop of Dublin‡ that now is, who has left memorials of his bounty in many parts of his province. I might add the bishop of Raphoe,§ and several others: not forgetting the late dean of Down, Dr. Pratt, who bestowed one thousand pounds upon the university: which foundation, (that I may observe by the way) if the bill proposed should pass, would be in the same circumstances with the bishops, nor ever able again to advance the stipends of the fellows and students, as lately they found it necessary to do; the determinate sum appointed by the statutes for commons, being not half sufficient, by the fall of money, to afford necessary sustenance. But

* Dr. Marsh. H.
† Dr. Lindsay. H.
‡ Dr. King. H.
§ Dr. Foster. H.

the passing of such a bill must put an end to all ecclesiastical beneficence for the time to come; and whether this will be supplied by those who are to reap the benefit, better than it has been done by grantees of impropriate tithes, who received them upon the old church conditions of keeping hospitality, it will be easy to conjecture.

To allege, that passing such a bill would be a good encouragement to improve bishops' lands, is a great error. Is it not the general method of landlords to wait the expiration of a lease, and then cant their lands to the highest bidder? and what should hinder the same course to be taken in church leases, when the limitation is removed of paying half the real value to the bishop? In riding through the country, how few improvements do we see upon the estates of laymen, farther than about their own domains? To say the truth, it is a great misfortune, as well to the public, as to the bishops themselves, that their lands are generally let to lords and great squires, who, in reason, were never designed to be tenants; and therefore may naturally murmur at the payment of rent, as a subserviency they were not born to. If the tenants to the church were honest farmers, they would pay their fines and rents with cheerfulness, improve their lands, and thank God they were to give but a moderate half value for what they held. I have heard a man of a thousand pound a year talk with great contempt of bishops' leases, as being on a worse foot than the rest of his estate; and he had certainly reason: my answer was, that such leases were originally intended only for the benefit of industrious husbandmen, who would think it a great blessing to be provided for, instead of having their farms screwed up to the height, not eating one comfortable meal in a year, nor able to find shoes for their children.

I know not any advantage that can accrue by such a bill, except the preventing of perjury in jurymen, and false dealings in tenants; which is a remedy like that of giving my money to a highwayman, before he attempts to take it by force; and so I shall be sure to prevent the sin of robbery.

I had wrote* thus far, and thought to have made an end, when a bookseller sent me a small pamphlet, entitled, *The Case of the Laity, with some Queries;* full of the strongest malice against the clergy, that I have any where met with since the reign of Toland, and others of that tribe. These kinds of advocates do infinite mischief to OUR GOOD CAUSE, by giving grounds to the unjust reproaches of TORIES and JACOBITES, who charge us with being enemies to the church. If I bear a hearty unfeigned loyalty to his majesty King George, and the house of Hanover, not shaken in the least by the hardships we lie under, which never can be imputable to so gracious a prince; if I sincerely abjure the pretender, and all popish successors; if I bear a due veneration to the glorious memory of the late King William, who preserved these kingdoms from popery and slavery, with the expense of his blood, and hazard of his life; and, lastly, if I am for a proper indulgence to all dissenters, I think nothing more can be reasonably demanded of me as a WHIG, and that my political catechism is full and complete. But whoever, under the shelter of that party denomination, and of many great professions of loyalty, would destroy, or undermine, or injure the church established; I utterly disown him, and think he ought to choose another name of distinction for himself and his adherents. I came into the cause upon other principles,

* This should be, *written*, the participle, not the preterite, *wrote*.

which by the grace of God I mean to preserve as long as I live. Shall we justify the accusations of our adversaries? *Hoc Ithacus velit.*——The tories and jacobites will behold us, with a malicious pleasure, determined upon the ruin of our friends. For is not the present set of bishops almost entirely of that number, as well as a great majority of the principal clergy? And a short time will reduce the whole by vacancies upon death.

An impartial reader, if he pleases to examine what I have already said, will easily answer the bold queries in the pamphlet I mentioned: he will be convinced that the reason still strongly exists, for which that limiting law was enacted. A reasonable man will wonder, where can be the insufferable grievances, that an ecclesiastical landlord should expect a moderate or a third part value in rent for his lands, when his title is at least as ancient and as legal as that of a layman: who is yet but seldom guilty of giving such beneficial bargains. Has the nation been thrown into confusion; and have many poor families been ruined by rack-rents paid for the lands of the church? does the nation cry out to have a law that must in time send their bishops a begging? But, God be thanked, the clamour of enemies to the church is not yet the cry, and I hope will never prove the voice, of the nation. The clergy, I conceive, will hardly allow that the people maintain them, any more than in the sense that all landlords whatsoever are maintained by the people. Such assertions as these, and the insinuations they carry along with them, proceed from principles which cannot be avowed by those who are for preserving the happy constitution in church and state. Whoever were the proposers of such queries, it might have provoked a bold writer to retaliate, perhaps with more justice than prudence, by showing at whose door

the grievance lies, and that the bishops at least are not to answer for the poverty of tenants.

To gratify this great reformer, who enlarges the episcopal rent roll almost one half, let me suppose that all the church-lands in the kingdom were thrown up to the laity; would the tenants in such a case sit easier in their rents than they do now? or, would the money be equally spent in the kingdom? No; the farmer would be screwed up to the utmost penny by the agents and stewards of absentees, and the revenues employed in making a figure at London; to which city a full third part of the whole income of Ireland is annually returned, to answer that single article of maintenance for Irish landlords.

Another of his quarrels is against pluralities and non-residence: as to the former, it is a word of ill name, but not well understood. The clergy having been stripped of the greatest part of their revenues, the glebes being generally lost, the tithes in the hands of laymen, the churches demolished, and the country depopulated; in order to preserve a face of christianity, it was necessary to unite small vicarages sufficient to make a tolerable maintenance for a minister. The profit of ten or a dozen of these unions seldom amounts to above eighty or a hundred pounds a year. If there be a very few dignitaries whose preferments are perhaps more liable to this accusation, it is to be supposed, they may be favourites of the time; or persons of superior merit, for whom there has ever been some indulgence in all governments.

As to non-residence, I believe there is no christian country upon earth, where the clergy have less to answer for upon that article. I am confident there are not ten clergymen in the kingdom, who, properly speaking, can be termed non-residents: for surely we are not to

reckon in that number, those who, for want of glebes, are forced to retire to the nearest neighbouring village for a cabin to put their heads in; the leading man of the parish, when he makes the greatest clamour, being least disposed to accommodate the minister with an acre of ground. And, indeed, considering the difficulties the clergy lie under upon this head, it has been frequent matter of wonder to me, how they are able to perform that part of their duty so well as they do.

There is a noble author,* who has lately addressed to the house of commons an excellent discourse for the encouragement of agriculture; full of most useful hints, which I hope that honourable assembly will consider as they deserve. I am no stranger to his lordship; and, excepting in what relates to the church, there are few persons with whose opinions I am better pleased to agree; and am therefore grieved when I find him charging the inconveniencies in the payment of tithes upon the clergy and their proctors. His lordship is above considering a very known and vulgar truth, that the meanest farmer has all manner of advantages against the most powerful clergyman, by whom it is impossible he can be wronged, although the minister were ever so ill disposed; the whole system of teasing, perplexing, and defrauding the proctor, or his master, being as well known to every ploughman, as the reaping or sowing of his corn, and much more artfully practised. Besides, the leading man in the parish must have his tithes at his own rate, which is hardly ever above one quarter of the value. And I have heard it computed by many skilful observers, whose interest was not concerned, that the clergy did not receive, throughout the kingdom, one half of what the laws have made their due.

* The late Lord Molesworth. H.

As to his lordship's discontent against the bishops court, I shall not interpose farther than in venturing my private opinion, that the clergy would be very glad to recover their just dues, by a more short, decisive, and compulsive method, than such a cramped limited jurisdiction will allow.

His lordship is not the only person, disposed to give the clergy the honour of being the sole encouragers of all new improvements. If hops, hemp, flax, and twenty things more are to be planted, the clergy alone must reward the industrious farmer by abatement of the tithe. What if the owner of nine parts in ten, would please to abate proportionably in his rent for every acre thus improved? Would not a man just dropped from the clouds, upon a full hearing, judge the demand to be at least as reasonable?

I believe no man will dispute his lordship's title to his estate; nor will I the *jus divinum* of tithes, which he mentions with some emotion. I suppose the affirmative would be of little advantage to the clergy, for the same reason, that a maxim in law has more weight in the world than an article of faith. And yet I think there may be such a thing as sacrilege; because it is frequently mentioned by Greek and Roman authors, as well as described in Holy Writ. This I am sure of; that his lordship would at any time excuse a parliament, for not concerning itself in his properties, without his own consent.

The observations I have made upon his lordship's discourse, have not, I confess, been altogether proper to my subject: however, since he has been pleased therein to offer some proposals to the house of commons with relation to the clergy, I hope he will excuse me for differing from him; which proceeds from his own prin-

ciple, the desire of defending liberty and property, that he has so strenuously and constantly maintained.

But the other writer openly declares for a law empowering the bishops to set feefarms; and says, "Whoever intimates, that they will deny their consent to such a reasonable law, which the whole nation cries for, are enemies to them and the church." Whether this be his real opinion, or only a strain of mirth and irony, the matter is not much. However, my sentiments are so directly contrary to his, that I think, whoever impartially reads and considers what I have written upon this argument, has either no regard for the church established under the hierarchy of bishops, or will never consent to any law, that shall repeal or elude the limiting clause relating to the real half value, contained in the act of parliament *decimo Caroli*, for the preservation of the inheritance, rights and profits of lands belonging to the church and persons ecclesiastical; which was grounded upon reasons, that do still, and must for ever subsist.

October 21, 1723.

THE

BLUNDERS, DEFICIENCIES, DISTRESSES,

AND

MISFORTUNES OF QUILCA.

PROPOSED TO CONTAIN ONE AND TWENTY VOLUMES IN QUARTO.

BEGUN APRIL 20, 1724; AND TO BE CONTINUED WEEKLY, IF DUE ENCOURAGEMENT BE GIVEN.

But one lock and a half in the whole house.

The key of the garden door lost.

The empty bottles all uncleanable.

The vessels for drink few and leaky.

The new house all going to ruin before it is finished.

One hinge of the street door broke off, and the people forced to go out and come in at the back door.

The door of the Dean's bedchamber full of large chinks.

The beaufet letting in so much wind that it almost blows out the candles.

The Dean's bed threatening every night to fall under him.

The little table loose and broke in the joints.

The passages open over head, by which the cats pass continually into the cellar and eat the victuals, for

which one was tried, condemned, and executed by the sword.

The large table in a very tottering condition.

But one chair in the house fit for sitting on, and that in a very ill state of health.

The kitchen perpetually crowded with savages.

Not a bit of mutton to be had in the country.

Want of beds, and a mutiny thereupon among the servants, till supplied from Kells.

An egregious want of all the most common necessary utensils.

Not a bit of turf this cold weather; and Mrs. Johnson and the Dean in person, with all their servants, forced to assist at the bog in gathering up the wet bottoms of old clamps.

The grate in the ladies' bed chamber broke, and forced to be removed, by which they were compelled to be without fire, the chimney smoking intolerably; and the Dean's great coat was employed to stop the wind from coming down the chimney, without which expedient they must have been starved to death.

A messenger sent a mile to borrow an old broken tundish.

Bottles stopped with bits of wood and tow, instead of corks.

Not one utensil for a fire, except an old pair of tongs, which travels through the house, and is likewise employed to take the meat out of the pot, for want of a flesh fork.

Every servant an errant thief as to victuals and drink, and every comer and goer as errant a thief of every thing he or she can lay their hands on.

The spit blunted with poking into bogs for timber, and tears the meat to pieces.

Bellum atque fœminam: or a kitchen war between nurse and a nasty crew of both sexes; she to preserve order and cleanliness, they to destroy both; and they generally are conquerors.

April 28. This morning the great foredoor quite open, dancing backward and forward with all its weight upon the lower hinge. which must have been broken if the Dean had not accidentally come and relieved it.

A great hole in the floor of the ladies' chamber, every hour hazarding a broken leg.

Two damnable iron spikes erect on the Dean's bedstead, by which he is in danger of a broken shin at rising, and going to bed.

The ladies' and Dean's servants growing fast into the manners and thieveries of the natives; the ladies themselves very much corrupted; the Dean perpetually storming, and in danger of either losing all his flesh, or sinking into barbarity for the sake of peace.

Mrs. Dingley full of cares for herself, and blunders and negligence for her friends. Mrs. Johnson sick and helpless. The Dean deaf and fretting; the lady's maid awkward and clumsy; Robert lazy and forgetful; William a pragmatical, ignorant, and conceited puppy; Robin and nurse the two great and only supports of the family.

Bellum lactæum: or the milky battle, fought between the Dean and the crew of Quilca; the latter insisting on their privilege of not milking till eleven in the forenoon; whereas Mrs. Johnson wanted milk at eight for her health. In this battle the Dean got the victory; but the crew of Quilca begin to rebel again; for it is this day almost ten o'clock, and Mrs. Johnson has not got her milk.

A proverb on the laziness and lodgings of the servants: "The worse their sty—the longer they lie."

Two great holes in the wall of the ladies' bedchamber, just at the back of the bed, and one of them directly behind Mrs. Johnson's pillow, either of which would blow out a candle in the calmest day.

TO

HIS GRACE, WILLIAM, LORD ARCH-BISHOP OF DUBLIN, &c.

THE HUMBLE REPRESENTATION OF THE CLERGY OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

January, 1724.

MY LORD,

YOUR Grace having been pleased to communicate to a certain brief, by letters patent, for the relief of one Charles M'Carthy, whose house in College-green, Dublin, was burnt by an accidental fire; and having desired us to consider of the said brief, and give our opinions thereof to your grace:

We, the clergy of the city of Dublin, in compliance with your Grace's desire, and with great acknowledgments for your paternal tenderness toward us, having maturely considered the said brief by letters patent, compared the several parts of it with what is enjoined us by the rubric (which is confirmed by act of parliament,) and consulted persons skilled in the laws of the church; do, in the names of ourselves and of the rest of our brethren the clergy of the diocese of Dublin, most humbly represent to your grace:

First, That by this brief, your grace is required and commanded, to recommend and command all the parsons, vicars, &c. to advance so great an act of charity.

We shall not presume to determine how far your grace may be commanded by the said brief, but we humbly

conceive that the clergy of your diocese cannot, by any law now in being, be commanded by your grace to advance the said act of charity, any otherwise than by reading the said brief in our several churches, as prescribed by the rubric.

Secondly, Whereas it is said in the said brief, "That the parsons, vicars, &c. upon the first Lord's day, or opportunity, after the receipt of the copy of the said brief, shall, deliberately and affectionately, publish and declare the tenour thereof to his majesty's subjects, and earnestly persuade, exhort, and stir them up, to contribute freely and cheerfully toward the relief of the said sufferer:"

We do not comprehend what is meant by the word *opportunity*. We never do preach upon any day except the Lord's day, or some solemn days legally appointed; neither is it possible for the strongest constitution among us to obey this command (which includes no less than a whole sermon) upon any other opportunity than when our people are met together in the church; and to perform this work in every house where the parishes are very populous, consisting sometimes here in town of nine hundred or one thousand houses, would take up the space of a year, although we should preach in two families every day: and almost as much time in the country, where the parishes are of large extent, the roads bad, and the people too poor to receive us and give charity at once.

But, if it be meant that these exhortations are commanded to be made in the church upon the Lord's day; we are humbly of opinion, that it is left to the discretion of the clergy, to choose what subjects they think most proper to preach on, and at what times; and if they preach either false doctrines or seditious principles they are liable to be punished.

It may possibly happen that the sufferer recommended may be a person not deserving the favour intended by the brief; in which case no minister who knows the sufferer to be an undeserving person, can, with a safe conscience, deliberately and affectionately publish the brief, much less earnestly persuade, exhort, and stir up the people to contribute freely and cheerfully toward the relief of such a sufferer.*

Thirdly, Whereas, in the said brief, the ministers and curates are required, "on the weekdays next after the Lord's day when the brief was read, to go from house to house, with their churchwardens, to ask and receive from all persons the said charity:" We cannot but observe here, that the said ministers are directly made collectors of the said charity in conjunction with the churchwardens, which, however, we presume, was not intended, as being against all law and precedent: and therefore, we apprehend, there may be some inconsistency, which leaves us at a loss how to proceed: for, in the next paragraph, the ministers and curates are only required, where they conveniently can, to accompany the churchwardens, or procure some other of the chief inhabitants to do the same. And in a following paragraph, the whole work seems left entirely to the churchwardens, who are required to use their utmost diligence to gather and collect the said charity, and to pay the same, in ten days after, to the parson, vicar, &c.

In answer to this, we do represent to your grace our humble opinion, that neither we, nor our churchwardens, can be legally commanded or required to go from house to house, to receive the said charity; be-

* This M'Carthy's house was burnt in the month of August, 1723: and the universal opinion of mankind was, that M'Carthy himself was the person who set fire to the house. D. S.

cause your grace has informed us in your order, at your visitation, A. D. 1712, "That neither we nor our churchwardens are bound to make any collections for the poor, save in the church;" which also appears plainly by the rubric, that appoints both time and place, as your grace has observed in your said order.

We do likewise assure your grace, that it is not in our power to procure some of the chief inhabitants of our parishes to accompany the churchwardens from house to house in these collections: and we have reason to believe that such a proposal made to our chief inhabitants (particularly in this city, where our chief inhabitants are often peers of the land) would be received in a manner very little to our own satisfaction, or to the advantage of the said collections.

Fourthly, The brief does will, require, and command the bishops, and all other dignitaries of the church, "that they make their contributions distinctly, to be returned in the several provinces to the several archbishops of the same."

Upon which we take leave to observe, that the terms of expression here are of the strongest kind, and in a point that may subject the said dignitaries (for we shall say nothing of the bishops) to great inconveniencies.

The said dignitaries are here willed, required, and commanded, to make their contributions distinctly; by which it should seem that they are absolutely commanded to make contributions (for the word *distinctly* is but a circumstance) and may be understood not very agreeable to a voluntary, cheerful contribution. And, therefore, if any bishop or dignitary should refuse to make his contribution (perhaps for very good reasons) he may be thought to incur the crime of disobedience to his majesty, which all good subjects abhor, when such a command is according to law.

Most dignities of this kingdom consist only of parochial tithes, and the dignitaries are ministers of parishes. A doubt may therefore arise, whether the said dignitaries are willed, required, and commanded, to make their contributions in both capacities, distinctly as dignitaries, and jointly as parsons or vicars.

Many dignities in this kingdom are the poorest kind of benefices; and it should seem hard to put poor dignitaries under the necessity either of making greater contributions than they can afford, or of exposing themselves to the censure of wanting charity, by making their contributions public.

Our Saviour commands us, in works of charity, to "let not our left hand know what our right hand doth;" which cannot well consist with our being willed, required, and commanded, by any earthly power, where no law is prescribed, to publish our charity to the world, if we have a mind to conceal it.

Fifthly, Whereas it is said, in the said brief, "That the parson, vicar, &c. of every parish, shall, in six days after the receipt of the said charity, return it to his respective chancellor, &c." This may be a great grievance, hazard, and expense, to the said parson, in remote and desolate parts of the country; where often an honest messenger (if such a one can be got) must be hired to travel forty or fifty miles going and coming; which will probably cost more than the value of the contribution he carries with him. And this charge, if briefs should happen to be frequent, would be enough to undo many a poor clergyman in the kingdom.

Sixthly, We observe in the said brief, that the provost and fellows of the university, judges, officers of the court, and professors of laws, common and civil, are neither willed, required, nor commanded, to make their contributions; but that so good a work is only recom-

mended to them. Whereas, we conceive, that all his majesty's subjects are equally obliged, with or without his majesty's commands, to promote works of charity according to their power; and that the clergy, in their ecclesiastical capacity, are only liable to such commands as the rubric, or any other law, shall enjoin, being born to the same privileges of freedom with the rest of his majesty's subjects.

We cannot but observe to your grace, that, in the English act of the fourth year of Queen Anne, for the better collecting charity money on briefs by letters patent, &c. the ministers are obliged only to read the briefs in their churches, without any particular exhortations; neither are they commanded to go from house to house with the churchwardens, nor to send the money collected to their respective chancellors, but pay it to the undertaker or agent of the sufferer. So that we humbly hope, the clergy of this kingdom shall not, without any law in being, be put to greater hardships in this case than their brethren in England; where the legislature, intending to prevent the abuses in collecting charity money on briefs, did not think fit to put the clergy under any of those difficulties we now complain of in the present brief by letters patent, for the relief of Charles M'Carthy aforesaid.

The collections upon the Lord's day are the principal support of our own numerous poor in our several parishes; and therefore every single brief, with the benefit of a full collection over the whole kingdom, must deprive several thousands of poor of their weekly maintenance, for the sake only of one person, who often becomes a sufferer by his own folly or negligence, and is sure to overvalue his losses double or treble: so that, if this precedent be followed, as it certainly will if the present brief should succeed, we may probably have a new

brief every week; and thus, for the advantage of fifty-two persons, whereof not one in ten is deserving, and for the interest of a dozen dexterous clerks and secretaries, the whole poor in the kingdom will be likely to starve.

We are credibly informed, that neither the officers of the lord primate in preparing the report of his grace's opinion, nor those of the great seal in passing the patent for briefs, will remit any of their fees, both which do amount to a considerable sum: and thus the good intentions of well-disposed people are in a great measure disappointed, a large part of their charity being anticipated and alienated by fees and gratuities.

Lastly, We cannot but represent to your grace our great concern and grief, to see the pains and labour of our churchwardens so much increased, by the injunctions and commands put upon them in this brief, to the great disadvantage of the clergy and the people, as well as to their own trouble, damage, and loss of time; to which, great additions have been already made, by laws appointing them to collect the taxes for the watch and the poor-house, which they bear with great unwillingness; and if they shall find themselves farther laden with such briefs as this of M'Carthy, it will prove so great a discouragement, that we shall never be able to provide honest and sufficient persons for that weighty office of churchwarden, so necessary to the laity as well as the clergy, in all things that relate to the order and regulation of parishes.

Upon all these considerations, we humbly hope that your grace, of whose fatherly care, vigilance, and tenderness, we have had so many and great instances, will represent the case to his most excellent majesty, or the chief governor in this kingdom, in such a manner, tha we may be neither under the necessity of declining his

majesty's commands in his letters patent, or of taking new and grievous burdens upon ourselves and our churchwardens, to which neither the rubric, nor any other law in force, obliges us to submit.

THE

DRAPIER'S

LETTERS.

FIRST PRINTED IN 1724.

*** About the year 1722, when Charles Duke of Grafton was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, one William Wood, a hardwareman and a bankrupt, alleging the great want of copper money in that kingdom, procured a patent for coining 108,000*l.* to pass there as current money. The Dean believing this measure to be a vile job from the beginning to the end, and that the chief procurers of the patent were to be sharers in the profits which would arise from the ruin of a kingdom, assumed the character of a *Draper*, which for some reasons he chose to write *Drapier;* and in the following Letters warned the people not to receive the coin which was then sent over. H.—"To judge by the accounts generally given of that transaction, it would appear a monster of despotism and fraud, that the halfpence were deficient in weight and goodness, and that the circulation of them would have been followed by the total ruin of Ireland. In fact, the inimitable humour of Swift, which places the kingdom on one side, and William Wood on the other, has misled our judgment, and captivated our imagination; and most persons have formed their opinion from his Drapier's Letters and satirical poems, rather than from authentic documents or well-attested facts. The simple narrative of this transaction, stripped of the exaggerated dress in which the malignant wit of the author has invested it, is reduced to a short compass. There being great deficiency of copper currency in Ireland, the king, in virtue of his prerogative, granted to William Wood a patent for coining farthings and half pence, to the value of 100,000l. sterling, on certain terms which the patentee was bound to follow. William Wood, who in the party language of Swift is ridiculed under the denomination of a *hardwareman* and a low mechanic, was a great proprietor and renter of iron works in England. He had a lease of all the mines on the crown lands in thirty-nine counties, was proprietor of several iron and copper works, and carried on, to a very considerable amount, manufactures for the different preparations of those metals. Among many proposals submitted to government, that which he delivered was accepted, and was considered by all persons of judgment or capacity, not biassed by party or national prejudice, as beneficial to Ireland. But the natives did not see it in so favourable a light; and before the money was circulated a general ferment was excited."

Coxe, Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, vol. i. p. 210.

LETTER I.

TO THE TRADESMEN, SHOPKEEPERS, FARMERS, AND COUNTRY PEOPLE IN GENERAL, OF THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND, CONCERNING THE BRASS HALFPENCE, COINED BY ONE WILLIAM WOOD, HARDWAREMAN, WITH A DESIGN TO HAVE THEM PASS IN THIS KINGDOM.

Wherein is shown the power of his patent, the value of his halfpence, and how far every person may be obliged to take the same in payments, and how to behave himself, in case such an attempt should be made by Wood, or any other person.

(VERY PROPER TO BE KEPT IN EVERY FAMILY.)

BY M. B. DRAPIER. 1724.

BRETHREN, FRIENDS, COUNTRYMEN,
AND FELLOW-SUBJECTS,

WHAT I intend now to say to you, is, next to your duty to God, and the care of your salvation, of the greatest concern to yourselves and your children; your bread and clothing, and every common necessary of life, entirely depend upon it. Therefore I do most earnestly exhort you, as men, as Christians, as parents, and as lovers of your country, to read this paper with the utmost attention, or get it read to you by others; which that you may do at the less expense, I have ordered the printer to sell it at the lowest rate.

It is a great fault among you, that when a person writes with no other intention than to do you good, you

will not be at the pains to read his advices. One copy of this paper may serve a dozen of you, which will be less than a farthing a piece. It is your folly, that you have no common or general interest in your view, not even the wisest among you; neither do you know, or inquire, or care, who are your friends, or who are your enemies.

About four years ago a little book was written, to advise all people to wear the manufactures of this our own dear country.* It had no other design, said nothing against the king or parliament, or any person whatsoever; yet the poor printer was prosecuted two years with the utmost violence, and even some weavers themselves (for whose sake it was written) being upon the JURY, found him guilty. This would be enough to discourage any man from endeavouring to do you good, when you will either neglect him, or fly in his face for his pains, and when he must expect only danger to himself, and to be fined and imprisoned, perhaps to his ruin.

However, I cannot but warn you once more of the manifest destruction before your eyes, if you do not behave yourselves as you ought.

I will therefore first tell you the plain story of the fact; and then I will lay before you how you ought to act, in common prudence, according to the laws of your country.

The fact is this: It having been many years since COPPER HALFPENCE OR FARTHINGS were last coined in this kingdom, they have been for some time very scarce, and many counterfeits passed about under the name of *raps*: several applications were made to England, that we might have liberty to coin new ones, as in former times we did; but they did not succeed. At last one

* "A proposal for the use of Irish manufactures;" the tract which begins this volume. N.

Mr. Wood, a mean ordinary man, a hardware-dealer, procured a patent under his majesty's broad seal to coin 108,000l. in copper for this kingdom; which patent, however, did not oblige any one here to take them, unless they pleased. Now you must know, that the halfpence and farthings in England pass for very little more than they are worth; and if you should beat them to pieces, and sell them to the brasier, you would not lose much above a penny in a shilling. But Mr. Wood made his halfpence of such base metal, and so much smaller than the English ones, that the brasier would hardly give you above a penny of good money for a shilling of his; so that this sum of 108,000l. in good gold and silver, must be given for trash, that will not be worth above eight or nine thousand pounds real value. But this is not the worst; for, Mr. Wood, when he pleases, may by stealth send over another 108,000l. and buy all our goods for eleven parts in twelve under the value. For example, if a hatter sells a dozen of hats for five shillings a piece, which amounts to three pounds, and receives the payment in Wood's coin, he really receives only the value of five shillings.

Perhaps you will wonder how such an ordinary fellow as this Mr. Wood could have so much interest as to get his MAJESTY'S broad seal for so great a sum of bad money to be sent to this poor country; and that all the nobility and gentry here could not obtain the same favour, and let us make our own halfpence, as we used to do. Now I will make that matter very plain: we are at great distance from the king's court, and have nobody there to solicit for us, although a great number of lords and 'squires, whose estates are here, and are our countrymen, spend all their lives and fortunes there: but this same Mr. Wood was able to attend constantly for his own interest; he is an Englishman, and had great friends;

and it seems, knew very well where to give money to those that would speak to others, that could speak to the king, and would tell a fair story. And his majesty, and perhaps the great lord or lords who advise him, might think it was for our country's good; and so, as the lawyers express it, "the king was deceived in his grant," which often happens in all reigns. And I am sure if his majesty knew that such a patent, if it should take effect according to the desire of Mr. Wood, would utterly ruin this kingdom, which has given such great proofs of its loyalty, he would immediately recall it, and perhaps show his displeasure to somebody or other: but a word to the wise is enough. Most of you must have heard with what anger our honourable house of commons received an account of this Wood's patent.* There were

* "Inflamed by national zeal, the two houses passed addresses to the crown, accusing the patentee of fraud and deceit; asserting, that the terms of the patent were infringed both in the quantity and quality of the coin; that the circulation of the halfpence would be highly prejudicial to the revenue, destructive of the commerce, and of most dangerous consequence to the rights and properties of the subjects: the commons, with an absurdity and effrontery hardly credible, declared, that, even had the terms of the patent been complied with, the nation would have suffered a loss at least of one hundred and fifty per cent.! and indeed the whole clamour rested on partial or ignorant representations. It was not at that time expected or dwelt on as a matter of speculative propriety, that the weight of the copper coin should be adequate to its circulating value; and the assertion, that Wood had carried on notorious frauds and deceits in the coinage, as advanced by Swift, and that the intrinsic was not equal to one eighth of the nominal value, was proved to be false, by an assay made at the mint, under Sir Isaac Newton and his two associates, men of no less honour than capacity, the result of which was, that in weight, goodness, and fineness, it rather exceeded than fell short of the conditions of the patent. But the clamour, however unjust, was raised, and became general; and it was a necessary act of prudence not to increase the ferment, by forcing upon a nation what was considered as unjust and fraudulent. Lord Carteret, who succeeded the duke of Grafton in the office of lord lieutenant, failed no less than his predecessor in all

several fine speeches made upon it, and plain proofs, that it was all a wicked cheat from the bottom to the top; and several smart votes were printed, which that same Wood had the assurance to answer likewise in print; and in so confident a way, as if he were a better man than our whole parliament put together.

This Wood, as soon as his patent was passed, or soon after, sends over a great many barrels of those halfpence to Cork, and other seaport towns; and to get them off, offered a hundred pounds in his coin, for seventy or eighty in silver: but the collectors of the king's customs very honestly refused to take them, and so did almost every body else. And since the parliament has condemned them, and desired the king that they might be stopped, all the kingdom do abominate them.

But Wood is still working underhand to force his halfpence upon us; and if he can, by the help of his friends in England, prevail so far as to get an order, that the commissioners and collectors of the king's money shall receive them, and that the army is to be paid with them, then he thinks his work shall be done. And this is the difficulty you will be under in such a case; for, the common soldier, when he goes to the market, or alehouse, will offer this money; and if it be refused, perhaps he will swagger and hector, and threaten to beat the butcher ~~or alewife~~, or take the goods by force, and throw them the bad halfpence. In this and the like cases, the shopkeeper or victualler, or any other tradesman, has no more to do, than to demand ten times the price of his goods, if it is to be paid in Wood's money; for example,

his endeavours to obtain the introduction of the copper money. The patent was surrendered, and tranquillity restored. Wood, as an indemnification for the loss he had sustained, received pensions to the amount of 3000l. a year for eight years." Coxe, p. 227.

twenty pence of that money for a quart of ale, and so in all things else, and not part with his goods till he gets the money.

For, suppose you go to an alehouse with that base money, and the landlord gives you a quart for four of those halfpence, what must the victualler do? his brewer will not be paid in that coin; or, if the brewer should be such a fool, the farmers will not take it from them for their bere,* because they are bound, by their leases, to pay their rents in good and lawful money of England; which this is not, nor of Ireland neither; and the 'squire, their landlord, will never be so bewitched to take such trash for his land; so that it must certainly stop somewhere or other, and wherever it stops, it is the same thing, and we are all undone.

The common weight of these halfpence is between four and five to an ounce, suppose five; then three shillings and fourpence will weigh a pound, and consequently twenty shillings will weigh six pounds butter weight. Now there are many hundred farmers, who pay two hundred pounds a year rent; therefore, when one of these farmers comes with his half year's rent, which is one hundred pounds, it will be at least six hundred pounds weight, which is three horses load.

If a 'squire has a mind to come to town to buy clothes, and wine, and spices for himself and family, or perhaps to pass the winter here, he must bring with him five or six horses well loaden with sacks, as the farmers bring their corn; and when his lady comes in her coach to our shops, it must be followed by a car loaded with Mr. Wood's money. And I hope we shall have the grace to take it for no more than it is worth.

* A sort of barley in Ireland. F

They say 'squire Conolly* has sixteen thousand pounds a year; now, if he sends for his rent to town, as it is likely he does, he must have two hundred and fifty horses to bring up his half year's rent, and two or three great cellars in his house for stowage. But what the bankers will do, I cannot tell: for I am assured, that some great bankers keep by them forty thousand pounds in ready cash, to answer all payments; which sum, in Mr. Wood's money, would require twelve hundred horses to carry it.

For my own part, I am already resolved what to do; I have a pretty good shop of Irish stuffs and silks, and instead of taking Mr. Wood's bad copper, I intend to truck with my neighbours the butchers and bakers and brewers, and the rest, goods for goods; and the little gold and silver I have, I will keep by me, like my heart's blood, till better times, or until I am just ready to starve; and then I will buy Mr. Wood's money, as my father did the brass money in King James's time, who could buy ten pounds of it with a guinea; and I hope to get as much for a pistole, and so purchase bread from those who will be such fools as to sell it me.

These halfpence, if they once pass, will soon be counterfeited, because it may be cheaply done, the stuff is so base. The Dutch likewise will probably do the same thing, and send them over to us to pay for our goods; and Mr. Wood will never be at rest, but coin on; so that in some years we shall have at least five times 108,000l. of this lumber. Now the current money of this kingdom is not reckoned to be above four hundred thousand pounds in all; and while there is a silver sixpence left, these bloodsuckers will never be quiet.

* Then speaker of the house of commons. F.

When once the kingdom is reduced to such a condition, I will tell you what must be the end: the gentlemen of estates will all turn off their tenants for want of payments, because, as I told you before, the tenants are obliged by their leases to pay sterling, which is lawful current money of England: then they will turn their own farmers, as too many of them do already; run all into sheep, where they can, keeping only such other cattle as are necessary; then they will be their own merchants, and send their wool, and butter, and hides, and linen beyond sea, for ready money, and wine, and spices, and silks. They will keep only a few miserable cottagers: the farmers must rob, or beg, or leave their country; the shopkeepers in this, and every other town, must break and starve; for it is the landed man that maintains the merchant, and shopkeeper, and handicraftsman.

But when the 'squire turns farmer and merchant himself, all the good money he gets from abroad, he will hoard up to send for England, and keep some poor tailor or weaver and the like in his own house, who will be glad to get bread at any rate.

I should never have done, if I were to tell you all the miseries that we shall undergo, if we be so foolish and wicked as to take this cursed coin. It would be very hard, if all Ireland should be put into one scale, and this sorry fellow Wood into the other; that Mr. Wood should weigh down this whole kingdom, by which England gets above a million of good money every year clear into their pockets: and that is more than the English do by all the world besides.

But your great comfort is, that as his majesty's patent does not oblige you to take this money, so the laws have not given the crown a power of forcing the subject to take what money the king pleases; for then, by the

same reason, we might be bound to take pebblestones, or cockleshells, or stamped leather, for current coin, if ever we should happen to live under an ill prince; who might likewise, by the same power, make a guinea pass for ten pounds, a shilling for twenty shillings, and so on; by which he would, in a short time, get all the silver and gold of the kingdom into his own hands, and leave us nothing but brass or leather, or what he pleased. Neither is any thing reckoned more cruel and oppressive in the French government, than their common practice of calling in all their money, after they have sunk it very low, and then coining it anew at a much higher value; which, however, is not the thousandth part so wicked as this abominable project of Mr. Wood. For, the French give their subjects silver for silver, and gold for gold; but this fellow will not so much as give us good brass or copper for our gold and silver, nor even a twelfth part of their worth.

Having said this much, I will now go on to tell you the judgment of some great lawyers in this matter; whom I feed on purpose for your sakes, and got their opinions under their hands, that I might be sure I went upon good grounds.

A famous law-book, called "the Mirror of Justice," discoursing of the charters (or laws) ordained by our ancient kings, declares the law to be as follows: "It was ordained that no king of this realm should change or impair the money, or make any other money than of gold or silver, without the assent of all the counties;" that is, as my lord Coke* says, without the assent of parliament.

This book is very ancient, and of great authority for the time in which it was written, and with that charac-

* 1 Inst. 576.

ter is often quoted by that great lawyer my Lord Coke.* By the law of England the several metals are divided into lawful or true metal, and unlawful or false metal: the former comprehends silver and gold, the latter all baser metals; that the former is only to pass in payments, appears by an act of parliament† made the twentieth year of Edward the first, called the statute concerning the passing of pence; which I give you here as I got it translated into English; for some of our laws at that time were, as I am told, written in Latin: "Whoever in buying or selling presumes to refuse a halfpenny or farthing of lawful money, bearing the stamp which it ought to have, let him be seized on as a contemner of the king's majesty, and cast into prison."

By this statute, no person is to be reckoned a contemner of the king's majesty, and for that crime to be committed to prison, but he who refuses to accept the king's coin made of lawful metal; by which, as I observed before, silver and gold only are intended.

That this is the true construction of the act, appears not only from the plain meaning of the words, but from my Lord Coke's‡ observation upon it. "By this act," says he, "it appears, that no subject can be forced to take, in buying, or selling, or other payment, any money made but of lawful metal; that is, of silver or gold."

The law of England gives the king all mines of gold and silver; but not the mines of other metals; the reason of which prerogative or power, as it is given by my Lord Coke,§ is, because money can be made of gold and silver, but not of other metals.

* 2 Inst. 576, 7.
† 2 Inst. 577.
‡ 2 Inst. 577.
§ 2 Inst. 577.

Pursuant to this opinion, halfpence and farthings were anciently made of silver, which is evident from the act of parliament of Henry the Fourth, chap. 4, whereby it is enacted as follows: Item, for the great scarcity that is at present within the realm of England of halfpence and farthings of silver, it is ordained and established, that the third part of all the money of silver plate which shall be brought to the bullion, shall be made into halfpence and farthings. This shows that the words "halfpence and farthings of lawful money" in that statute concerning the passing of pence, is meant a small coin in halfpence and farthings of silver.

This is farther manifest from the statute of the ninth year of Edward the Third, chap. 3, which enacts, "that no sterling halfpenny or farthing be molten for to make vessels, or any other thing by the goldsmiths, or others, upon forfeiture of the money so molten" (or melted.)

By another act in this king's reign, black money was not to be current in England. And by an act in the eleventh year of his reign, chap. 5, galley halfpence were not to pass. What kind of coin these were, I do not know; but I presume they were made of base metal. And these acts were no new laws, but farther declarations of the old laws relating to the coin.

Thus the law stands in relation to coin. Nor is there any example to the contrary, except one in Davis' Reports, who tells us, "that in the time of Tyrone's rebellion, queen Elizabeth ordered money of mixed metal to be coined in the Tower of London, and sent over hither for the payment of the army, obliging all people to receive it; and commanding that all silver money should be taken only as bullion;" that is, for as much as it weighed. Davis tells us several particulars in this matter, too long here to trouble you with, and "that the privy council of this kingdom obliged a merchant in

England, to receive this mixed money for goods transmitted hither."

But this proceeding is rejected by all the best lawyers, as contrary to law, the privy council here having no such legal power. And besides, it is to be considered, that the queen was then under great difficulties by a rebellion in this kingdom, assisted from Spain; and whatever is done in great exigencies and dangerous times, should never be an example to proceed by in seasons of peace and quietness.

I will now, my dear friends, to save you the trouble, set before you in short, what the law obliges you to do, and what it does not oblige you to.

First, you are obliged to take all money in payments which is coined by the king, and is of the English standard or weight, provided it be of gold or silver.

Secondly, you are not obliged to take any money which is not of gold or silver; not only the halfpence or farthings of England, but of any other country. And it is merely for convenience, or ease, that you are content to take them; because the custom of coining silver halfpence and farthings has long been left off; I suppose on account of their being subject to be lost.

Thirdly, much less are we obliged to take those vile halfpence of that same Wood, by which you must lose almost eleven pence in every shilling.

Therefore, my friends, stand to it one and all: refuse this filthy trash. It is no treason to rebel against Mr. Wood. His majesty, in his patent, obliges nobody to take these halfpence: our gracious prince has no such ill advisers about him; or, if he had, yet you see, the laws have not left it in the king's power to force us to take any coin but what is lawful, of right standard, gold and silver. Therefore you have nothing to fear.

And let me in the next place apply myself particularly to you, who are the poorer sort of tradesmen. Perhaps you may think, you will not be so great losers as the rich, if these halfpence should pass; because you seldom see any silver, and your customers come to your shops or stalls with nothing but brass, which you likewise find hard to be got. But you may take my word, whenever this money gains footing among you, you will be utterly undone. If you carry these halfpence to a shop for tobacco or brandy, or any other thing that you want; the shopkeeper will advance his goods accordingly, or else he must break, and leave the key under the door. "Do you think I will sell you a yard of tenpenny stuff for twenty of Mr. Wood's halfpence? No, not under two hundred at least; neither will I be at the trouble of counting, but weigh them in a lump." I will tell you one thing farther, that if Mr. Wood's project should take, it would ruin even our beggars; for when I give a beggar a halfpenny, it will quench his thirst, or go a good way to fill his belly: but the twelfth part of a halfpenny will do him no more service than if I should give him three pins out of my sleeve.

In short, these halfpence are like "the accursed thing, which," as the Scripture tells us, "the children of Israel were forbidden to touch." They will run about like the plague, and destroy every one who lays his hand upon them. I have heard scholars talk of a man who told the king, that he had invented a way to torment people by putting them into a bull of brass with fire under it: but the prince put the projector first into his brazen bull, to make the experiment. This very much resembles the project of Mr. Wood; and the like of this may possibly be Mr. Wood's fate; that the brass he contrived to torment this kingdom with, may prove his own torment, and his destruction at last.

N. B. The author of this paper is informed by persons, who have made it their business to be exact in their observations on the true value of these halfpence, that any person may expect to get a quart of twopenny ale for thirty-six of them.

I desire that all families may keep this paper carefully by them, to refresh their memories whenever they shall have farther notice of Mr. Wood's halfpence, or any other the like imposture.

LETTER II.

TO

MR. HARDING THE PRINTER,

ON OCCASION OF A

PARAGRAPH IN HIS NEWSPAPER

Of Aug 1, 1724,

RELATING TO MR. WOOD'S HALFPENCE.

Aug. 4, 1724.

In your newsletter of the first instant, there is a paragraph, dated from London, July 25, relating to Wood's halfpence; whereby it is plain, what I foretold in my letter to the shopkeepers, &c. that this vile fellow would never be at rest; and that the danger of our ruin approaches nearer; and therefore the kingdom requires new and fresh warning. However, I take this paragraph to be, in a great measure, an imposition upon the public; at least I hope so, because I am informed that Wood is generally his own newswriter. I cannot but observe from that paragraph, that this public enemy of ours, not satisfied to ruin us with his trash, takes every occasion to treat this kingdom with the utmost contempt. He represents several of our merchants and traders, upon examination before a committee of council, agreeing, that there was the utmost necessity of copper money here, before his patent: so that several gentlemen have been

forced to tally with their workmen, and give them bits of cards sealed and subscribed with their names. What then? If a physician prescribe to a patient a dram of physic, shall a rascal apothecary cram him with a pound, and mix it up with poison? And is not a landlord's hand and seal to his own labourers a better security for five or ten shillings, than Wood's brass, ten times below the real value, can be to the kingdom for a hundred and eight thousand pounds?

But who are these merchants and traders of Ireland that made this report of the utmost necessity we are under for copper money? They are only a few betrayers of their country, confederates with Wood, from whom they are to purchase a great quantity of his coin, perhaps at half the price that we are to take it, and vend it among us, to the ruin of the public, and their own private advantages. Are not these excellent witnesses, upon whose integrity the fate of the kingdom must depend, evidences in their own cause, and sharers in this work of iniquity?

If we could have deserved the liberty of coining for ourselves, as we formerly did, and why we have it not is every body's wonder as well as mine, ten thousand pounds might have been coined here in Dublin of only one fifth below the intrinsic value; and this sum, with the stock of halfpence we then had, would have been sufficient: but Wood, by his emissaries, enemies to God and this kingdom, has taken care to buy up as many of our old halfpence as he could; and from thence the present want of change arises; to remove which by Mr. Wood's remedy, would be, to cure a scratch on the finger by cutting off the arm. But, supposing there were not one farthing of change in the whole nation, I will maintain, that five-and-twenty thousand pounds would be a sum fully sufficient to answer all our occa-

sions. I am no inconsiderable shopkeeper in this town. I have discoursed with several of my own, and other trades, with many gentlemen both of city and country, and also with great numbers of farmers, cottagers, and labourers, who all agree, that two shillings in change for every family, would be more than necessary in all dealings. Now, by the largest computation (even before that grievous discouragement of agriculture,* which has so much lessened our numbers) the souls in this kingdom are computed to be one million and a half; which, allowing six to a family, makes two hundred and fifty thousand families, and consequently two shillings to each family, will amount only to five-and-twenty thousand pounds; whereas, this honest, liberal hardwareman, Wood, would impose upon us above four times that sum.

Your paragraph relates farther, that Sir Isaac Newton reported an assay, taken at the Tower, of Wood's metal; by which it appears, that Wood had in all respects performed his contract. His contract! with whom? Was it with the parliament or people of Ireland? Are not they to be the purchasers? But they detest, abhor, and reject it as corrupt, fraudulent, mingled with dirt and trash. Upon which he grows angry, goes to law, and will impose his goods upon us by force.

But your newsletter says, that an assay was made of the coin. How impudent and insupportable is this! Wood takes care to coin a dozen or two halfpence of good metal, sends them to the Tower, and they are approved; and these must answer all that he has already coined, or shall coin for the future. It is true, indeed, that a gentleman often sends to my shop for a pattern of

* Perhaps the prohibition from ploughing. Rep. 2. H.

stuff; I cut it fairly off, and if he likes it, he comes, or sends, and compares the pattern with the whole piece, and probably we come to a bargain. But if I were to buy a hundred sheep, and the grazier should bring me one single wether fat and well fleeced, by way of pattern, and expect the same price round for the whole hundred, without suffering me to see them before he was paid, or giving me good security to restore my money for those that were lean, or shorn, or scabby, I would be none of his customer. I have heard of a man who had a mind to sell his house, and therefore carried a piece of brick in his pocket, which he showed as a pattern to encourage purchasers: and this is directly the case in point with Mr. Wood's assay.

The next part of the paragraph, contains Mr. Wood's voluntary proposals for preventing any farther objections or apprehensions.

His first proposal is, "that whereas he has already coined seventeen thousand pounds, and has copper prepared to make it up forty thousand pounds, he will be content to coin no more, unless the EXIGENCIES OF TRADE REQUIRE IT, although his patent empowers him to coin a far greater quantity."

To which if I were to answer, it should be thus: "Let Mr. Wood and his crew of founders and tinkers coin on, till there is not an old kettle left in the kingdom; let them coin old leather, tobacco-pipe clay, or the dirt in the street, and call their trumpery by what name they please, from a guinea to a farthing; we are not under any concern to know how he and his tribe of accomplices think fit to employ themselves. But I hope, and trust, that we are all, to a man, fully determined to have nothing to do with him or his ware."

The king has given him a patent to coin halfpence, but has not obliged us to take them: and I have already

shown in my Letter to the Shopkeepers, &c. that the law has not left it in the power of the prerogative to compel the subject to take any money, beside gold and silver of the right sterling and standard.

Wood farther purposes (if I understand him right, for his expressions are dubious) that he will not coin above forty thousand pounds, unless the exigencies of trade require it. First, I observe that this sum of forty thousand pounds is almost double to what I proved to be sufficient for the whole kingdom, although we had not one of our old halfpence left. Again, I ask, who is to be judge, when the exigencies of trade require it? Without doubt he means himself; for as to us of this poor kingdom, who must be utterly ruined if this project should succeed, we were never once consulted till the matter was over, and he will judge of our exigencies by his own: neither will these be ever at an end, till he and his accomplices shall think they have enough: and it now appears that he will not be content with all our gold and silver, but intends to buy up our goods and manufactures with the same coin.

I shall not enter into examination of the prices for which he now proposes to sell his halfpence, or what he calls his copper, by the pound; I have said enough of it in my former letter, and it has likewise been considered by others. It is certain that by his own first computation, we were to pay three shillings for what was intrinsically worth but one, although it had been of the true weight and standard for which he pretended to have contracted; but there is so great a difference both in weight and badness in several of his coins, that some of them have been nine in ten below the intrinsic value, and most of them six or seven.

His last proposal being of a peculiar strain and nature, deserves to be very particularly considered,

both on account of the matter and the style. It is as follows:

"Lastly, In consideration of the direful apprehensions which prevail in Ireland, that Mr. Wood will, by such coinage, drain them of their gold and silver; he proposes to take their manufactures in exchange, and that no person be obliged to receive more than five pence halfpenny at one payment."

First, observe this little impudent hardwareman turning into ridicule the direful apprehensions of a whole kingdom, priding himself as the cause of them, and daring to prescribe (what no king of England ever attempted) how far a whole nation shall be obliged to take his brass coin. And he has reason to insult: for sure there was never an example in history of a great kingdom kept in awe for above a year, in daily dread of utter destruction, not by a powerful invader at the head of twenty thousand men, not by a plague or a famine, not by a tyrannical prince (for we never had one more gracious,) or a corrupt administration, but by one single, diminutive, insignificant mechanic.

But to go on: To remove our direful apprehensions that he will drain us of our gold and silver by his coinage, this little arbitrary mock-monarch most graciously offers to take our manufactures in exchange. Are our Irish understandings indeed so low in his opinion? Is not this the very misery we complain of; that his cursed project will put us under the necessity of selling our goods for what is equal to nothing? How would such a proposal sound from France or Spain, or any other country with which we traffic, if they should offer to deal with us only upon this condition, that we should take their money at ten times higher than the intrinsic value? Does Mr. Wood think, for instance, that we will sell him a stone of wool for a parcel of his counters

not worth sixpence, when we can send it to England, and receive as many shillings in gold and silver? Surely there was never heard such a compound of impudence, villany, and folly.

His proposals conclude with perfect high treason. He promises, that no person shall be obliged to receive more than five pence halfpenny of his coin in one payment. By which it is plain, that he pretends to oblige every subject in this kingdom to take so much in every payment, if it be offered; whereas his patent obliges no man, nor can the prerogative, by law, claim such a power, as I have often observed; so that here Mr. Wood takes upon him the entire legislature, and an absolute dominion over the properties of the whole nation.

Good God! who are this wretch's advisers; who are his supporters, abettors, encouragers, or sharers? Mr. Wood will oblige me to take five pence halfpenny of his brass in every payment. And I will shoot Mr. Wood and his deputies through the head, like highwaymen or housebreakers, if they dare to force one farthing of their coin on me in the payment of a hundred pounds. It is no loss of honour to submit to the lion: but who, with the figure of a man, can think with patience of being devoured alive by a rat? He has laid a tax upon the people of Ireland of seventeen shillings at least in the pound: a tax, I say, not only upon lands, but interest-money, goods, manufactures, the hire of handicraftsmen, labourers, and servants. Shopkeepers, look to yourselves! Wood will oblige and force you to take five pence halfpenny of his trash in every payment: and many of you receive twenty, thirty, forty payments in one day, or else you can hardly find bread: and pray consider how much that will amount to in a year; twenty times five pence halfpenny is nine shillings and two pence, which is above a hundred and sixty pounds a

year, wherein you will be losers of at least one hundred and forty pounds by taking your payments in his money. If any of you be content to deal with Mr. Wood on such conditions, you may; but for my own particular, let his money perish with him. If the famous Mr. Hampden rather chose to go to prison, than pay a few shillings to King Charles I. without authority of parliament; I will rather choose to be hanged, than have all my substance taxed at seventeen shillings in the pound, at the arbitrary will and pleasure of the venerable Mr. Wood.

The paragraph concludes thus: "N. B. (that is to say, *nota bene* or *mark well*) No evidence appeared from Ireland, or elsewhere, to prove the mischiefs complained of, or any abuses whatsoever committed in the execution of the said grant."

The impudence of this remark exceeds all that went before. First, the house of commons in Ireland, which represents the whole people of the kingdom; and secondly, the privy council addressed his majesty against these halfpence: what could be done more to express the universal sense of the nation? If his copper were diamonds, and the kingdom were entirely against it, would not that be sufficient to reject it? Must a committee of the whole house of commons, and our whole privy-council, go over to argue *pro* and *con* with Mr. Wood? To what end did the king give his patent for coining halfpence in Ireland? Was it not because it was represented to his sacred majesty, that such a coinage would be of advantage to the good of this kingdom, and of all his subjects here? It is to the patentee's peril, if this representation be false, and the execution of his patent be fraudulent and corrupt. Is he so wicked and foolish to think, that his patent was given him to ruin a million and a half of people, that he might be a gainer of three

or four score thousand pounds to himself? Before he was at the charge of passing a patent, much more of raking up so much filthy dross, and stamping it with his majesty's image and superscription, should he not first, in common sense, in common equity, and common manners, have consulted the principal party concerned; that is to say, the people of the kingdom, the house of lords, or commons, or the privy council? If any foreigner should ask us, "whose image and superscription there is on Wood's coin?" we should be ashamed to tell him, it was Cæsar's. In that great want of copper halfpence which he alleges we were, our city set up our Cæsar's* statue in excellent copper at an expense that is equal in value to thirty thousand pound of his coin; and we will not receive his image in worse metal.

I observe many of our people putting a melancholy case on this subject. "It is true," say they, "we are all undone if Wood's halfpence must pass; but what shall we do, if his majesty puts out a proclamation commanding us to take them?" This has often been dinned in my ears. But I desire my countrymen to be assured that there is nothing in it. The king never issues out a proclamation but to enjoin what the law permits him. He will not issue out a proclamation against law; or, if such a thing should happen by a mistake, we are no more obliged to obey it, than to run our heads into the fire. Besides, his majesty will never command us by a proclamation, what he does not offer to command us in the patent itself. There he leaves it to our discretion; so that our destruction must be entirely owing to ourselves: Therefore let no man be afraid of a proclamation, which will never be granted; and if it should, yet upon this oc-

* An equestrian statute of George I. at Essex-bridge, Dublin. F.

Wood on the one part, and the lords justices, privy-council, and both houses of parliament on the other: the design of it being to clear William Wood, and to charge the other side with casting rash and groundless aspersions upon him.

But if it be really what the title imports, Mr. Wood has treated the committee with great rudeness, by publishing an act of theirs in so unbecoming a manner, without their leave, and before it was communicated to the government and privy council of Ireland; to whom the committee advised that it should be transmitted. But, with all deference be it spoken, I do not conceive that a Report of a committee of the council in England is hitherto a law in either kingdom; and until any point is determined to be a law, it remains disputable by every subject.

This (may it please your lordships and worships) may seem a strange way of discoursing in an illiterate shopkeeper. I have endeavoured (although without the help of books) to improve that small portion of reason God has been pleased to give me; and when reason plainly appears before me, I cannot turn away my head from it. Thus, for instance, if any lawyer should tell me that such a point were law, from which many gross palpable absurdities must follow; I would not, I could not believe him. If Sir Edward Coke should positively assert (which he no where does, but the direct contrary) "that a limited prince could, by his prerogative, oblige his subjects to take half an ounce of lead, stamped with his image, for twenty shillings in gold," I should swear he was deceived, or a deceiver; because a power like that, would leave the whole lives and fortunes of the people entirely at the mercy of the monarch; yet this in effect is what Wood has advanced in some of his papers; and what suspicious people may possibly appre-

able to make a shift when many of my betters are starving. But I am grieved to see the coldness and indifference of many people, with whom I discourse. Some are afraid of a proclamation; others shrug up their shoulders, and cry, "What would you have us to do?" Some give out, there is no danger at all: others are comforted, that it will be a common calamity, and they shall fare no worse than their neighbours. Will a man who hears midnight robbers at his door, get out of bed, and raise his family for a common defence; and shall a whole kingdom lie in a lethargy, while Mr. Wood comes, at the head of his confederates, to rob them of all they have, to ruin us and our posterity for ever? If a highwayman meets you on the road, you give him your money to save your life; but God be thanked, Mr. Wood cannot touch a hair of your heads. You have all the laws of God and man on your side: when he or his accomplices offer you his dross, it is but saying no, and you are safe. If a madman should come into my shop with a handful of dirt raked out of the kennel, and offer it in payment for ten yards of stuff, I would pity, or laugh at him; or, if his behavour deserved it, kick him out of my doors. And if Mr. Wood comes to demand my gold and silver, or commodities for which I have paid my gold and silver, in exchange for his trash, can he deserve or expect better treatment?

When the evil day is come (if it must come) let us mark and observe those who presume to offer these halfpence in payment. Let their names, and trades, and places of abode, be made public, that every one may be aware of them, as betrayers of their country, and confederates with Mr. Wood. Let them be watched at markets and fairs; and let the first honest discoverer give the word about that Mr. Wood's halfpence have been

offered, and caution the poor innocent people not to receive them.

Perhaps I have been too tedious; but there would never be an end, if I attempted to say all that this melancholy subject will bear. I will conclude with humbly offering one proposal; which, if it were put into practice, would blow up this destructive project at once. Let some skilful, judicious pen, draw up an advertisement to the following purpose:

"Whereas one William Wood, hardwareman, now or lately sojourning in the city of London, has, by many misrepresentations, procured a patent for coining a hundred and eight thousand pounds in copper halfpence for this kingdom; which is a sum five times greater than our occasions require: And whereas it is notorious, that the said Wood has coined his halfpence of such base metal, and false weight, that they are at least six parts in seven below the real value: and whereas we have reason to apprehend, that the said Wood may at any time hereafter clandestinely coin as many more halfpence as he pleases: and whereas the said patent neither does, nor can oblige his majesty's subjects to receive the said halfpence in any payment, but leaves it to their voluntary choice; because by law the subject cannot be obliged to take any money, except gold or silver: and whereas, contrary to the letter and meaning of the said patent, the said Wood has declared, that every person shall be obliged to take five pence halfpenny of his coin in every payment: and whereas the house of commons, and privy-council, have severally addressed his most sacred majesty, representing the ill consequences which the said coinage may have upon this kingdom: and lastly, whereas it is universally agreed, that the whole nation to a man, (except Mr. Wood, and his confederates) are in the utmost apprehensions of the ruinous consequences that

must follow from the said coinage; therefore we, whose names are underwritten, being persons of considerable estates in this kingdom, and residers therein, do unanimously resolve and declare, that we will never receive one farthing or halfpenny of the said Wood's coining; and that we will direct all our tenants to refuse the said coin from any person whatsoever; of which, that they may not be ignorant, we have sent them a copy of this advertisement, to be read to them by our stewards, receivers, &c."

I could wish, that a paper of this nature might be drawn up, and signed by two or three hundred principal gentlemen of this kingdom; and printed copies thereof sent to their several tenants. I am deceived if any thing could sooner defeat this execrable design of Wood, and his accomplices. This would immediately give the alarm, and set the kingdom on their guard; this would give courage to the meanest tenant and cottager. "How long, O Lord, righteous and true," &c.

I must tell you in particular, Mr. Harding, that you are much to blame. Several hundred persons have inquired at your house for my "Letter to the Shopkeepers," &c. and you had none to sell them. Pray keep yourself provided with that Letter, and with this: you have got very well by the former; but I did not then write for your sake, any more than I do now. Pray advertise both in every newspaper: and let it not be your fault or mine, if our countrymen will not take warning. I desire you likewise to sell them as cheap as you can.

I am your servant,

M. B.

LETTER III.

SOME OBSERVATIONS

ON

A PAPER,

CALLED,

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

OF

THE MOST HONOURABLE

THE PRIVY COUNCIL IN ENGLAND,

RELATING TO WOOD'S HALFPENCE.

TO THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY OF THE KINGDOM OF IRELAND.

August 25, 1724.

HAVING already written two letters to the people of my own level and condition, and having now very pressing occasion for writing a third: I thought I could not more properly address it than to your lordships and worships.

The occasion is this: A printed paper was sent to me on the 18th instant, entitled, "A Report* of the

* "The Report, though drawn up with great precision and clearness, made no impression. It was answered by Swift in the Drapier's Letters: his hardy assertions and false representations were impli-

Committee of the Lords of his Majesty's most honourable Privy-Council in England, relating to Mr. Wood's halfpence and farthings." There is no mention made where the paper was printed; but I suppose it to have been in Dublin: and I have been told, that the copy did not come over in the Gazette, but in the London Journal, or some other print of no authority or consequence: And for any thing that legally appears to the contrary, it may be a contrivance to fright us; or a project of some printer, who has a mind to make a penny by publishing something upon a subject which now employs all our thoughts in this kingdom. Mr. Wood, in publishing this paper, would insinuate to the world, as if the committee had a greater concern for his credit, and private emolument, than for the honour of the privy-council, and both houses of parliament here, and for the quiet and welfare of this whole kingdom; for it seems intended as a vindication of Mr. Wood, not without several severe reflections on the houses of lords and commons of Ireland.

The whole is indeed written with the turn and air of a pamphlet; as if it were a dispute between William

citly believed; and the popular outcry was so violent, that the lords justices refused to issue the orders for the circulation of the coin. A general panic seized even the king's best friends, who were apprehensive of popular commotions. People of all descriptions and parties flocked in crowds to the bankers to demand their money, and drew their notes with an express condition to be paid in gold or silver. The publishers of the most treasonable pamphlets escaped with impunity, provided Wood and his patent were introduced into the work. The grand juries could scarcely be induced to find any bill against such delinquents; no witnesses in the prosecution were safe in their persons; and no juries were inclined, or if inclined, could venture to find them guilty. Not content with refusing to bring in a bill of indictment against the printer of the Drapier's Letters, the next grand jury of Dublin, in a presentment drawn up by Swift, presented all persons as enemies to the government who should endeavour, by fraud or otherwise, to impose Wood's halfpence on the people." Coxe, p. 228. N.

hend from some passages in that which is called the Report.

That paper mentions such persons to have been examined, who were desirous and willing to be heard upon this subject. I am told they were four in all; Coleby, Brown, Mr. Finley the banker, and one more, whose name I know not. The first of these was tried for robbing the treasury in Ireland; and though he was acquitted for want of legal proof, yet every person in the court believed him to be guilty. The second was tried for a rape, and stands recorded in the votes of the house of commons, for endeavouring, by perjury and subornation, to take away the life of John Bingham, Esq.

But, since I have gone so far as to mention particular persons, it may be some satisfaction to know who is this Wood himself, that has the honour to have a whole kingdom at his mercy for almost two years together. I find he is in the patent entitled *Esquire*, although he were understood to be only a hardwareman; and so I have been bold to call him in my former letters; however, a *'squire* he is, not only by virtue of his patent, but by having been a collector in Shropshire; where, pretending to have been robbed, and suing the county, he was cast, and for the infamy of the fact lost his employment.

I have heard another story of this 'squire Wood, from a very honourable lady, that one Hamilton told her. Hamilton was sent for six years ago, by Sir Isaac Newton, to try the coinage of four men, who then solicited a patent for coining halfpence for Ireland; their names were Wood, Costor, Eliston, and Parker. Parker made the fairest offer, and Wood the worst; for his coin were three halfpence in a pound weight less value than the other. By which it is plain, with what intentions he solicited his patent; but not so plain how he obtained it.

It is alleged in the said paper called the Report, "that upon repeated orders from a secretary of state for sending over such papers and witnesses, as should be thought proper to support the objections made against the patent by both houses of parliament; the lord lieutenant represented the great difficulty he found himself in, to comply with these orders: that none of the principal members of both houses who were in the king's service, or council, would take upon them to advise, how any material person, or papers, might be sent over on this occasion," &c. And this is often repeated, and represented as a proceeding that seems very extraordinary, and that in a matter which had raised so great a clamour in Ireland, no one person could be prevailed upon to come over from Ireland in support of the united sense of both houses of parliament in Ireland; especially that the chief difficulty should arise from a general apprehension of a miscarriage, in an inquiry before his majesty, or in a proceeding by due course of law, in a case where both houses of parliament had declared themselves so fully convinced, and satisfied upon evidence, and examinations taken in the most solemn manner.

How shall I, a poor ignorant shopkeeper, utterly unskilled in law, be able to answer so weighty an objection? I will try what can be done by plain reason, unassisted by art, cunning, or eloquence.

In my humble opinion, the committee of council has already prejudged the whole case, by calling the united sense of both houses of parliament in Ireland "a universal clamour." Here the addresses of the lords and commons of Ireland, against a ruinous, destructive project of an obscure, single undertaker, is called "a clamour." I desire to know, how such a style would be resented in England from a committee of council there to a parliament; and how many impeachments would

follow upon it? But, supposing the appellation to be proper, I never heard of a wise minister who despised the universal clamour of a people; and if that clamour can be quieted by disappointing the fraudulent practice of a single person, the purchase is not exorbitant.

But in answer to this objection: first it is manifest, that if this coinage had been in Ireland, with such limitations as have been formerly specified in other patents, and granted to persons of this kingdom, or even of England, able to give sufficient security, few or no inconveniencies could have happened. As to Mr. Knox's patent, mentioned in the Report, security was given into the exchequer, that the patentee should, upon all demands, be obliged to receive his halfpence back, and pay gold or silver in exchange for them. And Mr. Moor (to whom I suppose that patent was made over) was in 1694 forced to leave off coining before the end of that year, by the great crowds of people continually offering to return his coinage upon him. In 1698 he coined again, and was forced to give over for the same reason. This entirely alters the case; for there is no such condition in Wood's patent; which condition was worth a hundred times all other limitation whatsoever.

Put the case, that the two houses of lords and commons of England, and the privy council there, should address his majesty to recall a patent, from whence they apprehend the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom; and, to make it stronger if possible, that the whole nation, almost to a man, should thereupon discover "the most dismal apprehensions," as Mr. Wood styles them; would his majesty debate half an hour what he had to do? Would any minister dare advise him against recalling such a patent? Or would the matter be referred to the privy council, or to Westminster-hall; the two houses of parliament plaintiffs, and William Wood

defendant? And is there even the smallest difference between the two cases?

Were not the people of Ireland born as free as those of England? How have they forfeited their freedom? Is not their parliament as fair a representative of the people as that of England? And has not their privy council as great, or a greater share in the administration of public affairs? Are not they subjects of the same king? Does not the same sun shine upon them? And have they not the same God for their protector? Am I a freeman in England, and do I become a slave in six hours by crossing the channel? No wonder, then, if the boldest persons were cautious to interpose, in a matter already determined by the whole voice of the nation, or to presume to represent the representatives of the kingdom; and were justly apprehensive of meeting such a treatment as they would deserve at the next session. It would seem very extraordinary, if any inferior court in England, should take a great matter out of the hands of the high court of parliament, during a prorogation, and decide it against the opinion of both houses.

It happens, however, that although no persons were so bold as to go over as evidences, to prove the truth of the objections made against this patent by the high court of parliament here, yet these objections stand good, notwithstanding the answers made by Mr. Wood and his counsel.

The Report says, "that upon an assay made of the fineness, weight, and value of this copper, it exceeded in every article." This is possible enough in the pieces upon which the assay was made; but Wood must have failed very much in point of dexterity, if he had not taken care to provide a sufficient quantity of such halfpence, as would bear the trial; which he was able to do, although they were taken out of several parcels; since

it is now plain, that the bias of favour has been wholly on his side.

But what need is there of disputing, when we have a positive demonstration of Wood's fraudulent practices in this point? I have seen a large quantity of these halfpence weighed by a very skilful person, which were of four different kinds, three of them considerably under weight. I have now before me an exact computation of the difference of weight between these four sorts; by which it appears, that the fourth sort, or the lightest, differs from the first to a degree, that in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, the patentee will be a gainer, only by that difference, of twenty-four thousand four hundred and ninety-four pounds; and in the whole, the public will be a loser of eighty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-eight pounds sixteen shillings, even supposing the metal in point of goodness to answer Wood's contract, and the assay that has been made, which it infallibly does not. For, this point has likewise been inquired into by very experienced men; who, upon several trials on many of these halfpence, have found them to be at least one fourth part below the real value, not including the raps or counterfeits that he or his accomplices have already made of his own coin, and scattered about. Now the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, coined by the weight of the fourth or lightest sort of his halfpence, will amount to one hundred twenty-two thousand four hundred eighty-eight pounds, sixteen shillings; and if we subtract a fourth part of the real value, by the base mixture in the metal, we must add to the public loss one fourth part to be subtracted from the intrinsic value of the copper; which in three hundred and sixty tons amounts to ten thousand and eighty pounds; and this, added to the former sum of eighty-two thousand one hundred sixty-eight pounds,

sixteen shillings, will make in all ninety-two thousand two hundred forty-eight pounds loss to the public: beside the raps or counterfeits that he may at any time hereafter think fit to coin. Nor do I know whether he reckons the dross exclusive, or inclusive, with his three hundred and sixty tons of copper; which, however, will make a considerable difference in the account.

You will here please to observe, that the profit allowed to Wood by the patent, is twelve pence out of every pound of copper valued at one shilling and sixpence; whereas fivepence only is allowed for coinage of a pound weight for the English halfpence; and this difference is almost twenty-five *per cent.* which is double to the highest exchange of money, even under all the additional pressures and obstructions to trade, that this unhappy kingdom lies at present. This one circumstance, in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, makes a difference of twenty-seven thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds, between English and Irish halfpence, even allowing those of Wood to be all of the heaviest sort.

It is likewise to be considered, that for every halfpenny in a pound weight, exceeding the number directed by the patent, Wood will be a gainer in the coinage of three hundred and sixty tons of copper, sixteen hundred and eighty pounds profit more than the patent allows him; out of which he may afford to make his comptrollers easy upon that article.

As to what is alleged, that these halfpence far exceed the like coinage for Ireland in the reigns of his majesty's predecessors; there cannot well be a more exceptionable way of arguing, although the fact were true; which, however, is altogether mistaken; not by any fault in the committee, but by the fraud and imposition of Wood, who certainly produced the worst patterns he could find;

such as were coined in small numbers by permission to private men, as butchers' halfpence, black-dogs, and others the like; or perhaps the small St. Patrick's coin, which passes now for a farthing, or at best some of the smallest raps of the latest kind. For I have now by me halfpence coined in the year 1680 by virtue of the patent granted to my Lord Dartmouth, which was renewed to Knox, and they are heavier by a ninth part than those of Wood, and of much better metal; and the great St. Patrick's halfpence are yet larger than either.

But what is all this to the present debate? If, under the various exigencies of former times by wars, rebellions, and insurrections, the kings of England were sometimes forced to pay their armies here with mixed or base money; God forbid that the necessities of turbulent times should be a precedent for times of peace, and order, and settlement.

In the patent above mentioned, granted to Lord Dartmouth in the reign of King Charles the Second, and renewed to Knox, the securities given into the exchequer, obliging the patentee to receive his money back upon every demand, were an effectual remedy against all inconveniencies: and the copper was coined in our kingdom; so that we were in no danger to purchase it with the loss of all our silver and gold carried over to another, nor to be at the trouble of going to England, for the redressing of any abuse.

That the kings of England have exercised their prerogative of coining copper for Ireland, and for England, is not the present question: but, to speak in the style of the Report, it would seem a little extraordinary, supposing a king should think fit to exercise his prerogative by coining copper in Ireland, to be current in England, without referring it to his officers in that kingdom, to be informed whether the grant were reasonable, and whe-

ther the people desired it or not, and without regard to the addresses of his parliament against it. God forbid that so mean a man as I should meddle with the king's prerogative: but I have heard very wise men say, "that the king's prerogative is bounded and limited by the good and welfare of his people." I desire to know, whether it be not understood and avowed, that the good of Ireland was intended by this patent? But Ireland is not consulted at all in the matter; and, as soon as Ireland is informed of it, they declare against it: the two houses of parliament and the privy council address his majesty upon the mischiefs apprehended by such a patent; the privy council in England take the matter out of the parliament's cognizance; the good of the kingdom is dropped; and it is now determined that Mr. Wood shall have the power of ruining a whole nation for his private advantage.

I never can suppose, that such patents as these were originally granted with a view of being a job for the interest of a particular person, to the damage of the public. Whatever profit must arise to the patentee, was surely meant, at best, but as a secondary motive; and since somebody must be a gainer, the choice of the person was made either by favour, or something else, or by the pretence of merit and honesty. This argument returns so often and strongly into my head, that I cannot forbear frequently repeating it. Surely his majesty, when he consented to the passing of this patent, conceived he was doing an act of grace to his most loyal subjects of Ireland, without any regard to Mr. Wood, farther than as an instrument: but the people of Ireland think this patent (intended, no doubt, for their good) to be a most intolerable grievance; and therefore Mr. Wood can never succeed, without an open avowal that his profit is preferred, not only before the interest, but the very safety

and being of a great kingdom; and a kingdom distinguished for its loyalty perhaps above all others upon earth; not turned from its duty by the jurisdiction of the house of lords abolished at a stroke, by the hardships of the act of navigation newly enforced, by all possible obstructions in trade, and by a hundred other instances, enough to fill this paper; nor was there ever among us the least attempt toward an insurrection in favour of the pretender. Therefore, whatever justice a free people can claim, we have at least an equal title to it with our brethren in England; and whatever grace a good prince can bestow on the most loyal subjects, we have reason to expect it; neither has this kingdom any way deserved to be sacrificed to one single, rapacious, obscure, ignominious projector.

Among other clauses mentioned in this patent, to show how advantageous it is to Ireland, there is one which seems to be of a singular nature: "that the patentee shall be obliged, during his term, to pay eight hundred pounds a year to the crown, and two hundred pounds a year to the comptroller." I have heard, indeed, that the king's council do always consider in the passing of a patent, whether it will be of advantage to the crown; but I have likewise heard, that it is at the same time considered, whether passing of it may be injurious to any other persons, or bodies politic! However, although the attorney and solicitor be servants to the king, and therefore bound to consult his majesty's interest; yet I am under some doubt, whether eight hundred pounds a year to the crown would be equivalent to the ruin of a kingdom. It would be far better for us to have paid eight thousand pounds a year into his majesty's coffers in the midst of all our taxes, (which, in proportion, are greater in this kingdom than ever they were in England, even during the war) than purchase such an

addition to the revenue at the price of our utter undoing.

But here it is plain, that fourteen thousand pounds are to be paid by Wood, only as a small circumstantial charge for the purchase of his patent: what were his other visible costs I know not, and what were his latent, is variously conjectured; but he must be surely a man of some wonderful merit. Has he saved any other kingdom at his own expense, to give him a title of reimbursing himself by the destruction of ours? Has he discovered the longitude, or the universal medicine? No; but he has found the philosopher's stone after a new manner, by debasing copper, and resolving to force it upon us for gold.

When the two houses represented to his majesty that this patent to Wood was obtained in a clandestine manner, surely the committee could not think the parliament would insinuate, that it had not passed in the common forms, and run through every office where fees and perquisites were due. They knew very well, that persons in places were no enemies to grants; and that the officers of the crown could not be kept in the dark. But the late lord lieutenant* of Ireland affirmed it was a secret to him; and who will doubt his veracity, especially when he swore to a person of quality, from whom I had it, "that Ireland should never be troubled with these halfpence?" It was a secret to the people of Ireland, who were to be the only sufferers; and those who best know the state of the kingdom, and were most able to advise in such an affair, were wholly strangers to it.

It is allowed by the Report, that this patent was passed without the knowledge of the chief governor, or officers of Ireland: and it is there elaborately shown, that

* Duke of Grafton. F.

former patents have passed in the same manner, and are good in law. I shall not dispute legality of patents, but am ready to suppose it in his majesty's power to grant a patent for stamping round bits of copper to every subject he has. Therefore, to lay aside the point of law, I would only put the question, whether, in reason and justice, it would not have been proper, in an affair upon which the welfare of this kingdom depends, that the said kingdom should have received timely notice; and the matter not be carried on between the patentee, and the officers of the crown, who were to be the only gainers by it.

The parliament, who, in matters of this nature, are the most able and faithful counsellors, did represent this grant to be destructive of trade, and dangerous to the properties of the people; to which the only answer is, that the king has a prerogative to make such a grant.

It is asserted, "that in the patent to Knox, his halfpence are made and declared the current coin of the kingdom; whereas, in this to Wood, there is only a power given to issue them to such as will receive them." The authors of the Report, I think, do not affirm, that the king can, by law, declare any thing to be current money by his letters patent. I dare say they will not affirm it; and if Knox's patent contained in it powers contrary to law, why is it mentioned as a precedent in his majesty's just and merciful reign? But, although that clause be not in Wood's patent, yet possibly there are others, the legality whereof may be equally doubted; and particularly that, whereby a power is given to William Wood, to break into houses in search of any coin made in imitation of his. This may perhaps be affirmed to be illegal and dangerous to the liberty of the subject; yet this is a precedent taken from Knox's patent, where the same

power is granted, and is a strong instance what uses may be sometimes made of precedents.

But, although, before the passing of this patent, it was not thought necessary to consult any persons of this kingdom, or make the least inquiry, whether copper money were wanting among us; yet now at length when the matter is over, when the patent has long passed, when Wood has already coined seventeen thousand pounds, and has his tools and implements prepared to coin six times as much more, the committee has been pleased to make this affair the subject of inquiry; Wood is permitted to produce his evidences, which consist, as I have already observed, of four in number, whereof Coleby, Brown, and Mr. Finley the banker are three. And these were to prove that copper money was extremely wanted in Ireland. The first had been out of the kingdom almost twenty years, from the time that he was tried for robbing the treasury; and therefore his knowledge and credibility are equal. The second may be allowed a more knowing witness, because I think it is not above a year since the house of commons ordered the attorney-general to prosecute him, for endeavouring to take away the life of John Bingham, Esq. member of parliament, by perjury and subornation. He asserted, that he was forced to tally with his labourers for want of small money, which has often been practised in England by Sir Ambrose Crawley,* and others; but those who knew him better, give a different reason, if there be any truth at all in the fact, that he was forced to tally with his labourers, not for want of halfpence, but of more substantial money; which is highly possible, because the race of suborners, forgers, perjurers, and ravishers, are usually people of no fortune, or of those who have run

* Famed for his extensive iron manufactory. N.

it out by their vices and profuseness. Mr. Finley, the third witness, honestly confessed, that he was ignorant whether Ireland wanted copper or not; but his only intention was to buy a certain quantity from Wood at a large discount, and sell them as well as he could; by which he hoped to get two or three thousand pounds for himself.

But suppose there were not one single halfpenny of copper coin in this whole kingdom, (which Mr. Wood seems to intend, unless we will come to his terms, as appears by employing his emissaries to buy up our old ones at a penny in the shilling more than they pass for) it could not be any real evil to us, although it might be some inconvenience. We have many sorts of small silver coins, to which they are strangers in England; such as the French threepences, fourpence-halfpennies, and eight-pence farthings, the Scotch fivepences and tenpences, beside their twentypences and three-and-fourpences, by which we are able to make change to a halfpenny of almost any piece of gold and silver; and if we are driven to the expedient of a sealed card, with the little gold and silver still remaining, it will, I suppose, be somewhat better, than to have nothing left but Wood's adulterated copper, which he is neither obliged by his patent, nor HITHERTO able by his estate, to make good.

The Report farther tells us, "it must be admitted, that letters patents, under the great seal of Great Britain, for coining copper money for Ireland, are legal and obligatory, a just and reasonable exercise of his majesty's royal prerogative, and in no manner derogatory, or invasive of any liberty or privilege of his subjects of Ireland." First, we desire to know, why his majesty's prerogative might not have been as well asserted by passing this patent in Ireland, and subjecting the several conditions of

the contract to the inspection of those who are only* concerned, as was formerly done in the only* precedents for patents granted for coining in this kingdom, since the mixed money in Queen Elizabeth's time, during the difficulties of a rebellion: whereas now, upon the greatest imposition that can possibly be practised, we must go to England with our complaints; where it has been for some time the fashion to think, and to affirm, that we cannot be too hardly used. Again, the report says, "that such patents are obligatory." After long thinking, I am not able to find out, what can possibly be meant here by this word *obligatory*. The patent of Wood neither obliges him to utter his coin, nor us to take it; or if it did the latter, it would be so far void, because no patent can oblige the subject against law; unless an illegal patent passed in one kingdom, can bind another, and not itself.

Lastly, it is added, "that such patents are in no manner derogatory, or invasive of any liberty or privilege of the king's subjects of Ireland." If this proposition be true, as it is here laid down, without any limitation either expressed or implied, it must follow, that a king of England may at any time coin copper money for Ireland, and oblige his subjects here to take a piece of copper under the value of half a farthing, for half a crown, as was practised by the late King James; and even without that arbitrary prince's excuse, from the necessity and exigencies of his affairs. If this be in no manner derogatory, nor invasive of any liberties or privileges of the subjects of Ireland, it ought to have been expressed what our liberties and privileges are, and whether we have any at all; for, in specifying the word *Ireland*,

* It should be—who 'alone' are concerned, both to avoid the equivoque, and repetition of the same word—'only'—in the next line. S.

instead of saying "his majesty's subjects," it would seem to insinuate, that we are not upon the same foot with our fellow-subjects in *England;* which, however the practice may have been, I hope will never be directly asserted; for I do not understand that Poining's act deprived us of our liberty, but only changed the manner of passing laws here (which however was a power most indirectly obtained) by leaving the negative to the two houses of parliament. But, waving all controversies relating to the legislature, no person, I believe, was ever yet so bold as to affirm, that the people of Ireland have not the same title to the benefits of the common law, with the rest of his majesty's subjects; and therefore, whatever liberties or privileges the people of England enjoy by common law, we of Ireland have the same; so that, in my humble opinion, the word *Ireland*, standing in that proposition, was, in the mildest interpretation, a lapse of the pen.

The report farther asserts, "that the precedents are many, wherein cases of great importance to Ireland, and which immediately affected the interests of that kingdom, such as warrants, orders, and directions by the authority of the king and his predecessors, have been issued under the royal sign manual, without any previous reference or advice of his majesty's officers of Ireland, which have always had their due force, and have been punctually complied with and obeyed." It may be so, and I am heartily sorry for it; because it may prove an eternal source of discontent. However, among all these precedents, there is not one of a patent for coining money for Ireland.

There is nothing has perplexed me more than this doctrine of precedents. If a job is to be done, and upon searching records you find it has been done before, there

will not want a lawyer to justify the legality of it by producing his precedents, without ever considering the motives and circumstances that first introduced them; the necessity, or turbulence, or iniquity of times; the corruptions of ministers, or the arbitrary disposition of the prince then reigning. And I have been told by persons eminent in the law, "that the worst actions which human nature is capable of, may be justified by the same doctrine." How the first precedents began of determining cases of the highest importance to Ireland, and immediately affecting its interests, without any previous reference or advice to the king's officers here, may soon be accounted for. Before this kingdom was entirely reduced, by the submission of Tyrone in the last year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, there was a period of four hundred years, which was a various scene of war and peace between the English pale, and the Irish natives; and the government of that part of this island, which lay in the English hands, was, in many things, under the immediate administration of the king: silver and copper were often coined here among us; and once at last upon great necessity, a mixed or base metal was sent from England. The reign of King James I. was employed in settling the kingdom after Tyrone's rebellion; and this nation flourished extremely till the time of the massacre, 1641. In that difficult juncture of affairs, the nobility and gentry coined their own plate here in Dublin.

By all that I can discover, the copper coin of Ireland, for three hundred years past, consisted of small pence and halfpence; which particular men had licence to coin, and were current only within certain towns and districts, according to the personal credit of the owner, who uttered them, and was bound to receive them again, whereof I have seen many sorts; neither have I heard of any patent granted for coining copper for Ireland, till

the reign of King Charles the second, which was in the year 1680, to George Legge, Lord Dartmouth; and renewed by King James the second, in the first year of his reign (1685) to John Knox. Both patents were passed in Ireland; and in both, the patentees were bound to receive their coin again, from any that would offer them twenty shillings of it, for which they were obliged to pay gold or silver.

The patents both of Lord Dartmouth and Knox, were referred to the attorney-general here, and a report made accordingly; and both, as I have already said, were passed in this kingdom. Knox had only a patent for the remainder of the term granted to Lord Dartmouth; the patent expired in 1701, and, upon a petition by Roger Moor to have it renewed, the matter was referred hither; and upon the report of the attorney and solicitor, that it was not for his majesty's service, or interest of the nation to have it renewed, it was rejected by King William. It should therefore seem very extraordinary, that a patent for coining copper halfpence, intended and professed for the good of the kingdom, should be passed, without once consulting that kingdom, for the good of which it is declared to be intended; and this, upon the application of a poor, private, obscure mechanic; and a patent of such a nature, that as soon as ever the kingdom is informed of its being passed, they cry out unanimously against it, as ruinous and destructive. The representatives of the nation in parliament, and the privy council, address the king to have it recalled; yet the patentee, such a one as I have described, shall prevail to have this patent approved; and his private interest shall weigh down the application of a whole kingdom. St. Paul says, "All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient." We are answered, "that this patent is lawful:" but is it expedient? We read that the high

priest said, " It was expedient that one man should die for the people;" and this was a most wicked proposition: but that a whole nation should die for one man, was never heard of before.

But, because much weight is laid on the precedents of other patents for coining copper for Ireland, I will set this matter in as clear a light as I can. Whoever has read the Report, will be apt to think, that a dozen precedents at least could be produced of copper coined for Ireland, by virtue of patents passed in England, and that the coinage was there too; whereas I am confident, there cannot be one precedent shown of a patent passed in England for coining copper for Ireland, for above a hundred years past; and if there were any before, it must be in times of confusion. The only patents I could ever hear of, are those already mentioned to Lord Dartmouth and Knox; the former, in 1680, and the latter, in 1685. Now let us compare these patents with that granted to Wood. First, the patent to Knox, which was under the same conditions as that granted to Lord Dartmouth, was passed in Ireland; the government, and the attorney and solicitor general, making report that it would be useful to this kingdom.

The patent was passed with the advice of the king's council here; the patentee was obliged to receive his coin from those who thought themselves surcharged, and to give gold and silver for it. Lastly, the patentee was to pay only 16*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* per annum to the crown.

Then, as to the execution of that patent. First, I find the halfpence were milled, which, as it is of great use to prevent counterfeits (and therefore industriously avoided by Wood) so it was an addition to the charge of coinage. And as for the weight and goodness of the metal, I have several halfpence now by me, many of which weigh a ninth part more than those coined by Wood, and bear

the fire and hammer a great deal better, and, which is no trifle, the impression is fairer and deeper. I grant in deed that many of the latter coinage, yield in weight to some of Wood's, by a fraud natural to such patentees; but not so immediately after the grant, and before the coin grew current: for this circumstance, Mr. Wood must serve for a precedent in future times.

Let us now examine this new patent granted to William Wood. It passed upon very small suggestions of his own, and of a few confederates: it passed in England without the least reference hither; it passed unknown to the very lord-lieutenant, then in England. Wood is empowered to coin one hundred and eight thousand pounds, and all the officers in the kingdom (civil and military) are commanded in the report to countenance and assist him. Knox had only power to utter what we would take, and was obliged to receive his coin back again at our demand, and to enter into security for so doing. Wood's halfpence are not milled, and therefore more easily counterfeited by himself, as well as by others. Wood pays a thousand pounds *per annum* for fourteen years; Knox paid only sixteen pounds thirteen shillings and four pence per annum for twenty-one years.

It was the Report, that set me the example of making a comparison between those two patents, wherein the committee was grossly misled by the false representation of William Wood; as it was, by another assertion, "that seven hundred tons of copper were coined during the twenty-one years of Lord Dartmouth's and Knox's patents." Such a quantity of copper, at the rate of two shillings and eight pence per pound, would amount to about a hundred and ninety thousand pounds; which was very near as much as the current cash of the kingdom in those days; yet during that period, Ireland was

never known to have too much copper coin; and for several years there was no coining at all: besides, I am assured, that upon inquiring into the customhouse books, all the copper imported into this kingdom from 1683 to 1692, which includes eight years of the twenty-one (beside one year allowed for the troubles) did not exceed forty-seven tons. And we cannot suppose even that small quantity to have been wholly applied to coinage: so that I believe there was never any comparison more unluckily made, or so destructive of the design for which it was produced.

The Psalmist reckons it an effect of God's anger, when "he selleth his people for nought, and taketh no money for them." That we have greatly offended God by the wickedness of our lives, is not to be disputed: but our king we have not offended in word or deed; and although he be God's vicegerent upon earth, he will not punish us for any offences, except those we shall commit against his legal authority, his sacred person (which God preserve) or the laws of the land.

The Report is very profuse in arguments, "that Ireland is in great want of copper money." Who were the witnesses to prove it, has been shown already: but, in in the name of God, who are to be judges? Does not the nation best know its own wants? Both houses of parliament, the privy council, and the whole body of the people, declare the contrary. Or, let the wants be what they will, we desire they may not be supplied by Mr. Wood: we know our own wants but too well; they are many, and grievous to be borne, but quite of another kind. Let England be satisfied: as things go, they will in a short time have all our gold and silver, and may keep their adulterate copper at home, for we are determined not to purchase it with our manufactures, which Wood has graciously offered to accept. Our wants are not so

bad by a hundredth part, as the method he has taken to supply them. He has already tried his faculty in New-England; and I hope he will meet at least with an equal reception here; what that was, I leave to public intelligence. I am supposing a wild case; that if there should be any persons already receiving a monstrous pension out of this kingdom, who were instrumental in procuring the patent,* they have not either well consulted their own interests, or Wood must put mere dross into his copper, and still diminish its weight.

Upon Wood's complaint, "that the officers of the king's revenue here, had already given orders to all the inferior officers not to receive any of his coin;" the Report says "that this cannot but be looked upon as a very extraordinary proceeding, and contrary to the powers given in the patent." The committee say, "they cannot advise his majesty to give directions to the officers of the revenue here, not to receive or utter any of the said coin, as has been desired in the addresses of both houses: but, on the contrary, they think it both just and reasonable, that the king should immediately give orders to the commissioners of the revenue, &c. to revoke all orders, &c. that may have been given by them, to hinder or obstruct the receiving of the said coin." And accordingly, we are told, such orders are arrived. Now this was a cast of Wood's politics; for

* Great discredit was thrown upon the measure, by a report industriously circulated, that the profits of the patent were to be shared between Wood and the Duchess of Kendal. This fact was communicated by Carteret to Alan Broderick, second son to Lord Middleton, during his visit at Hanover, transmitted by him to his friends in Dublin, and was made public by various allusions of the Dean, in his writings and political ballads, particularly his "Simile on our want of Silver, and the only way to prevent it," in the eleventh volume of this collection. N.

this information was wholly false and groundless, which he knew very well; and that the commissioners of the revenue here were all, except one, sent us from England, and love their employments too well to have taken such a step: but Wood was wise enough to consider, that such orders of revocation would be an open declaration of the crown in his favour, would put the government here under a difficulty, would make a noise, and possibly create some terror in the poor people of Ireland. And one great point he has gained, that although any orders of revocation will be needless, yet a new order is to be sent (and perhaps is already here) to the commissioners of the revenue, and all the king's officers in Ireland, that Wood's halfpence be suffered and permitted, without any let, suit, trouble, molestation, or denial of any of the king's officers or ministers whatsoever, to pass, and be received as current money by such as shall be willing to receive them. In this order there is no exception; and therefore, as far as I can judge, it includes all officers, both civil and military, from the lord high chancellor to a justice of peace, and from the general to an ensign; so that Wood's project is not likely to fail for want of managers enough. For my own part, as things stand, I have but little regret to find myself out of the number; and therefore I shall continue in all humility to exhort and warn my fellow-subjects, never to receive or utter this coin, which will reduce the kingdom to beggary, by much quicker and larger steps, than have hitherto been taken.

But it is needless to argue any longer. The matter is come to an issue. His majesty, pursuant to the law, has left the field open between Wood and the kingdom of Ireland. Wood has liberty to offer his coin; and we have law, reason, liberty, and necessity to refuse it. A knavish jockey may ride an old foundered jade about

the market; but none are obliged to buy it. I hope the words "voluntary," and "willing to receive it," will be understood and applied in their true natural meaning, as commonly understood by Protestants. For, if a fierce captain comes to my shop to buy six yards of scarlet cloth, followed by a porter laden with a sack of Wood's coin upon his shoulders; if we are agreed about the price, and my scarlet lies ready cut upon the compter; if he then gives me the word of command to receive my money in Wood's coin, and calls me "a disaffected, jacobite dog," for refusing it (although I am as loyal a subject as himself, and without hire) and thereupon seizes my cloth, leaving me the price in this odious copper, and bids me take my remedy: in this case I shall hardly be brought to think, that I am left to my own will. I shall therefore on such occasions first order the porter aforesaid to go off with his pack; and then see the money in silver and gold in my possession, before I cut or measure my cloth. But, if a common soldier drinks his pot first, and then offers payment in Wood's halfpence, the landlady may be under some difficulty; for, if she complains to his captain or ensign, they are likewise officers included in this general order for encouraging these halfpence to pass as current money. If she goes to a justice of peace, he is also an officer, to whom this general order is directed. I do therefore advise her to follow my practice, which I have already begun, and be paid for her goods before she parts with them. However, I should have been content, for some reasons, that the military gentlemen had been excepted by name: because I have heard it said, that their discipline is best confined within their own district.

His majesty, in the conclusion of his answer to the address of the house of lords against Wood's coin, is

pleased to say, "that he will do every thing in his power to the satisfaction of his people." It should seem, therefore, that the recalling of the patent is not to be understood as a thing in his power. But however, since the law does not oblige us to receive this coin, and consequently the patent leaves it to our voluntary choice, there is nothing remaining to preserve us from ruin, but that the whole kingdom should continue in a firm, determinate resolution, never to receive or utter this fatal coin. After which, let the officers, to whom these orders are directed (I would willingly except the military) come with their exhortations, their arguments, and their eloquence, to persuade us to find our interest in our undoing. Let Wood and his accomplices travel about the country with cartloads of their ware, and see who will take it off their hands; there will be no fear of his being robbed, for a highwayman would scorn to touch it.

I am only in pain how the commissioners of the revenue will proceed in this juncture; because, I am told, they are obliged by an act of parliament to take nothing but gold and silver in payment for his majesty's customs: and I think they cannot justly offer this coinage of Mr. Wood to others, unless they will be content to receive it themselves.

The sum of the whole is this. The committee advises the king to send immediate orders to all his officers here, that Wood's coin be suffered and permitted, without any let, suit, trouble, &c. to pass, and be received as current money by such as shall be willing to receive the same. It is probable, that the first willing receivers may be those, who must receive it whether they will or not, at least under the penalty of losing an office. But the landed undepending men, the merchants, the shopkeepers, and bulk of the people, I hope, and am almost confident, will never receive it. What must the

consequence be? The owners will sell it for as much as they can get. Wood's halfpence will come to be offered for six a penny (yet then he will be a sufficient gainer) and the necessary receivers will be losers of two thirds in their salaries or pay.

This puts me in mind of a passage I was told many years ago in England. At a quarter-session in Leicester, the justices had wisely decreed to take off a half-penny in a quart from the price of ale. One of them, who came in after the thing was determined, being informed of what had passed, said thus: "Gentlemen, you have made an order, that ale should be sold in our county for three halfpence a quart; I desire you will now make another, to appoint who must drink it; for by G— I will not."

I must beg leave to caution your lordships and worships in one particular. Wood has graciously promised to load us at present only with forty thousand pounds of his coin, till the exigencies of the kingdom require the rest. I entreat you will never suffer Mr. Wood to be a judge of your exigencies. While there is one piece of silver or gold left in the kingdom, he will call it an exigency. He will double his present *quantum* by stealth as soon as he can; he will pour his own raps and counterfeits upon us; France and Holland will do the same; nor will our own coiners at home be behind them: to confirm which, I have now in my pocket a rap, or counterfeit halfpenny, in imitation of his; but so ill performed, that in my conscience I believe it is not of his coining.

I must now desire your lordships and worships, that you will give great allowance for this long undigested paper. I find myself to have gone into several repetitions, which were the effects of haste, while new thoughts fell in to add something to what I had said before. I

think I may affirm, that I have fully answered every paragraph in the Report; which* although it be not unartfully drawn, and is perfectly in the spirit of a pleader, who can find the most plausible topics in behalf of his client, yet there was no great skill required, to detect the many mistakes contained in it; which, however, are by no means to be charged upon the right honourable committee, but upon the most false, impudent, and fraudulent representations of Wood and his accomplices. I desire one particular may dwell upon your minds, although I have mentioned it more than once; that after all the weight laid upon precedents, there is not one produced in the whole Report of a patent for coining copper in England to pass in Ireland; and only two patents referred to (for indeed there were no more) which were both passed in Ireland, by references to the king's council here, both less advantageous to the coiner than this of Wood; and in both, securities given to receive the coin at every call, and give gold and silver in lieu of it. This demonstrates the most flagrant falsehood and impudence of Wood, by which he would endeavour to make the right honourable committee, his instruments (for his own illegal and exorbitant gain) to ruin a kingdom, which has deserved quite different treatment.

I am very sensible, that such a work as I have undertaken might have worthily employed a much better pen: but when a house is attempted to be robbed, it often happens the weakest in the family runs first to stop the door. All the assistance I had, were some informations from an eminent person; whereof I am afraid I have spoiled a few, by endeavouring to make them of a piece

* This sentence is altogether ungrammatical: 'which' here is a nominative without any verb to which it refers. It ought to have been 'in' which, (although it be not, &c.) there was no great skill required to detect the many mistakes contained.' S.

with my own productions, and the rest I was not able to manage: I was in the case of David, who could not move in the armour of Saul; and therefore I rather chose to attack this uncircumcised Philistine (Wood I mean) with a sling and a stone. And I may say for Wood's honour as well as my own, that he resembles Goliah in many circumstances, very applicable to the present purpose: for, Goliah had "a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail, and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass, and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders." In short, he was like Mr. Wood, all over brass, and he defied the armies of the living God. Goliah's conditions of combat were likewise the same with those of Wood: "if he prevail against us, then shall we be his servants." But if it happens that I prevail over him, I renounce the other part of the condition; "he shall never be a servant of mine;" for I do not think him fit to be trusted in any honest man's shop.

I will conclude with my humble desire and request, which I made in my second letter, that your lordships and worships would please to order a declaration to be drawn up, expressing in the strongest terms your resolution never to receive or utter any of Wood's halfpence, or farthings; and forbidding your tenants to receive them: that the said declaration may be signed by as many persons as possible,* who have estates in this kingdom, and be sent down to your several tenants aforesaid.

And if the dread of Wood's halfpence should continue until next quarter-sessions, which I hope it will not, the

* A declaration, pursuant to this request, was signed soon after by the most considerable persons of the kingdom; which was universally spread, and was of great use. F.

gentlemen of every county will then have a fair opportunity of declaring against them with unanimity and zeal. I am with the greatest respect,

(May it please your lordships and worships)

Your most dutiful and obedient servant,

M. B.

LETTER IV.

TO THE

WHOLE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.

MY DEAR COUNTRYMEN, *Oct.* 23, 1724.

HAVING already written three LETTERS upon so disagreeable a subject as Mr. Wood and his halfpence, I conceived my task was at an end; but I find that cordials must be frequently applied to weak constitutions, political as well as natural. A people long used to hardships, lose by degrees the very notions of liberty; they look upon themselves as creatures of mercy, and that all impositions laid on them by a stronger hand, are, in the phrase of the Report, legal and obligatory. Hence proceed that poverty and lowness of spirit, to which a kingdom may be subject, as well as a particular person. And when Esau came fainting from the field at the point to die, it is no wonder that he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

I thought I had sufficiently shown to all who could want instruction, by what methods they might safely proceed, whenever this coin should be offered to them; and I believe there has not been, for many ages, an example of any kingdom so firmly united in a point of great importance, as this of ours is at present against that detestable fraud. But, however, it so happens, that some weak people begin to be alarmed anew by rumours industriously spread. Wood prescribes to the newsmongers in London what they are to write. In one of their

papers, published here by some obscure printer, and certainly with a bad design, we are told, "that the papists in Ireland have entered into an association against his coin;" although it be notoriously known that they never once offered to stir in the matter; so that the two houses of parliament, the privy council, the great number of corporations, the lord mayor and aldermen of Dublin, the grand juries, and principal gentlemen of several counties, are stigmatised in a lump under the name of "papists."

This impostor and his crew do likewise give out, that by refusing to receive his dross for sterling, we "dispute the king's prerogative, are grown ripe for rebellion, and ready to shake off the dependency of Ireland upon the crown of England." To countenance which reports, he has published a paragraph in another newspaper, to let us know, that "the lord-lieutenant is ordered to come over immediately to settle his halfpence."

I entreat you, my dear countrymen, not to be under the least concern upon these, and the like rumours, which are no more than the last howls of a dog dissected alive, as I hope he has sufficiently been. These calumnies are the only reserve that is left him. For, surely our continued and (almost) unexampled loyalty, will never be called in question for not suffering ourselves to be robbed of all that we have, by one obscure ironmonger.

As to disputing the king's prerogative, give me leave to explain to those who are ignorant, what the meaning of that word *prerogative* is.

The kings of these realms enjoy several powers, wherein the laws have not interposed; so they can make war and peace without the consent of parliament, and this is a very great prerogative; but, if the parliament does not approve of the war, the king must bear the charge of it out of his own purse; and this is as great a

check on the crown. So, the king has a prerogative to coin money without consent of parliament: but he cannot compel the subject to take that money, except it be sterling, gold or silver; because herein he is limited by law. Some princes have indeed extended their prerogative farther than the law allowed them: wherein, however, the lawyers of succeeding ages, as fond as they are of precedents, have never dared to justify them. But, to say the truth, it is only of late times that prerogative has been fixed and ascertained. For, whoever reads the history of England, will find that some former kings, and those none of the worst, have, upon several occasions, ventured to control the laws, with very little ceremony or scruple, even later than the days of Queen Elizabeth. In her reign, that pernicious counsel of sending base money hither, very narrowly failed of losing the kingdom; being complained of by the lord deputy, the council, and the whole body of the English here: so that, soon after her death, it was recalled by her successor, and lawful money paid in exchange.

Having thus given you some notion of what is meant by "the king's prerogative," as far as a tradesman can be thought capable of explaining it, I will only add the opinion of the great Lord Bacon: "that, as God governs the world by the settled laws of nature, which he has made, and never transcends those laws but upon high, important occasions; so, among earthly princes, those are the wisest and the best, who govern by the known laws of the country, and seldomest make use of their prerogative."

Now, here you may see, that the vile accusation of Wood and his accomplices, charging us with disputing the king's prerogative, by refusing his brass, can have no place; because, compelling the subject to take any coin which is not sterling, is no part of the king's prerogative;

and I am very confident, if it were so, we should be the last of his people to dispute it; as well from that inviolable loyalty we have always paid to his majesty, as from the treatment we might in such a case justly expect from some, who seem to think we have neither common sense nor common senses. But, God be thanked, the best of them are only our fellow subjects, and not our masters. One great merit, I am sure we have, which those of English birth can have no pretence to, that our ancestors reduced this kingdom to the obedience of England; for which we have been rewarded with a worse climate, the privilege of being governed by laws to which we do not consent, a ruined trade, a house of peers without jurisdiction, almost an incapacity for all employments, and the dread of Wood's halfpence.

But we are so far from disputing the king's prerogative in coining, that we own he has power to give a patent to any man for setting his royal image and superscription upon whatever materials he pleases; and liberty to the patentee to offer them in any country from England to Japan, only attended with one small limitation, that nobody alive is obliged to take them.

Upon these considerations, I was ever against all recourse to England for a remedy against the present impending evil; especially when I observed, that the addresses of both houses, after long expectance, produced nothing but a REPORT altogether in favour of Wood; upon which I made some observations in a former letter, and might at least have made as many more; for it is a paper of as singular a nature as I ever beheld.

But I mistake; for, before this Report was made, his majesty's most gracious answer to the house of lords was sent over and printed; wherein are these words, granting the patent for coining halfpence and farthings, AGREEABLE TO THE PRACTICE OF HIS ROYAL PREDE-

CESSORS, &c. That King Charles II. and King James II. (AND THEY ONLY) did grant patents for this purpose, is indisputable, and I have shown it at large. Their patents were passed under the great seal of Ireland, by references to Ireland, the copper to be coined in Ireland; the patentee was bound, on demand, to receive his coin back in Ireland, and pay silver and gold in return. Wood's patent was made under the great seal of England, the brass coined in England, not the least reference made to Ireland: the sum immense, and the patentee under no obligation to receive it again, and give good money for it. This I only mention, because, in my private thoughts, I have sometimes made a query, whether the penner of those words in his majesty's most gracious ANSWER, AGREEABLE TO THE PRACTICE OF HIS ROYAL PREDECESSORS, had maturely considered the several circumstances, which, in my poor opinion, seem to make a difference.*

Let me now say something concerning the other great cause of some people's fear, as Wood has taught the London newswriter to express it, that his excellency the lord lieutenant is coming over to settle Wood's halfpence.

We know very well, that the lords lieutenants for several years past, have not thought this kingdom worthy the honour of their residence, longer than was absolutely necessary for the king's business; which, consequently wanted no speed in the despatch. And therefore it naturally fell into most men's thoughts, that a new go-

* On the arrival of Lord Carteret, soon after the publication of this letter, these passages were selected as sufficient ground for prosecution; and a proclamation was published by his excellency and council, offering a reward of three hundred pounds for discovering the author. Harding the printer was imprisoned, and a bill of indictment was ordered to be prepared against him: which gave occasion to the following paper. N.

vernor, coming at an unusual time, must portend some unusual business to be done; especially if the common report be true, that the parliament, prorogued to I know not when, is by a new summons, revoking that prorogation, to assemble soon after the arrival; for which extraordinary proceeding, the lawyers on the other side the water have, by great good fortune, found two precedents.

All this being granted, it can never enter into my head, that so little a creature as Wood could find credit enough with the king and his ministers, to have the lord lieutenant of Ireland sent hither in a hurry upon his errand.

For, let us take the whole matter nakedly, as it lies before us, without the refinements of some people, with which we have nothing to do. Here is a patent granted under the great seal of England, upon false suggestions, to one William Wood, for coining copper halfpence for Ireland: the parliament here, upon apprehensions of the worst consequences from the said patent, address the king to have it recalled: this is refused, and a committee of the privy council report to his majesty, that Wood has performed the conditions of his patent. He then is left to do the best he can with his halfpence, no man being obliged to receive them; the people here being likewise left to themselves, unite as one man, resolving they will have nothing to do with his ware. By this plain account of the fact, it is manifest that the king and his ministry are wholly out of the case, and the matter is left to be disputed between him and us. Will any man therefore attempt to persuade me, that a lord lieutenant is to be despatched over in great haste before the ordinary time, and a parliament summoned by anticipating a prorogation, merely to put a hundred thou-

sand pounds into the pocket of a sharper, by the ruin of a most loyal kingdom?

But supposing all this to be true: by what arguments could a lord lieutenant prevail on the same parliament, which addressed with so much zeal and earnestness against this evil, to pass it into a law? I am sure their opinion of Wood and his project is not mended since their last prorogation: and, supposing those methods should be used, which detractors tell us have been sometimes put in practice for gaining votes, it is well known, that in this kingdom there are few employments to be given; and if there were more, it is as well known to whose share they must fall.

But, because great numbers of you are altogether ignorant of the affairs of your country, I will tell you some reasons why there are so few employments to be disposed of in this kingdom. All considerable offices for life are here possessed by those, to whom the reversions were granted; and these have been generally followers of the chief governors, or persons who had interest in the court of England: so the Lord Berkeley Stratton holds that great office of master of the rolls; the Lord Palmerstown is first remembrancer, worth near 2000l. *per annum*. One Dodington, secretary to the Earl of Pembroke, begged the reversion of clerk of the pells, worth 2500l. a year, which he now enjoys by the death of the Lord Newtown. Mr. Southwell is secretary of state, and the Earl of Burlington lord high treasurer of Ireland by inheritance. These are only a few among many others, which I have been told of, but cannot remember. Nay, the reversion of several employments during pleasure, is granted the same way. This, among many others, is a circumstance, whereby the kingdom of Ireland is distinguished from all other nations upon earth, and makes it so difficult an affair to get into a civil em-

ploy, that Mr. Addison was forced to purchase an old obscure place, called keeper of the records in Bermingham's tower, of ten pounds a year, and to get a salary of 400l. annexed to it, though all the records there are not worth half a crown, either for curiosity or use. And we lately saw a favourite secretary* descend to be master of the revels, which by his credit and extortion he has made pretty considerable. I say nothing of the under treasurership, worth about 9000l. a year, nor of the commissioners of the revenue, four of whom generally live in England; for I think none of these are granted in reversion. But the jest is, that I have known, upon occasion, some of these absent officers as keen against the interest of Ireland, as if they had never been indebted to her for a single groat.

I confess I have been sometimes tempted to wish, that this project of Wood might succeed; because I reflected with some pleasure, what a jolly crew it would bring over among us of lords and 'squires, and pensioners of both sexes, and officers civil and military, where we should live together as merry and sociable as beggars; only with this one abatement, that we should neither have meet to feed, nor manufactures to clothe us, unless we could be content to prance about in coats of mail, or eat brass as ostriches do iron.

I return from this digression to that which gave me the occasion of making it: and I believe you are now convinced, that if the parliament of Ireland were as temptable as any other assembly within a mile of Christendom (which God forbid) yet the managers must of necessity fail, for want of tools to work with. But I will yet go one step farther, by supposing that a hundred new employments were erected, on purpose to gratify com-

* Mr. Hopkins, secretary to the Duke of Grafton. F.

pliers; yet still an insuperable difficulty would remain. For it happens, I know not how, that money is neither whig nor tory, neither of town nor country party; and it is not improbable, that a gentleman would rather choose to live upon his own estate, which brings him gold and silver, than with the addition of an employment, when his rents and salary must both be paid in Wood's brass, at above eighty per cent. discount.

For these, and many other reasons, I am confident you need not be under the least apprehensions from the sudden expectation of the lord lieutenant,* while we continue in our present hearty disposition, to alter which, no suitable temptation can possibly be offered. And if, as I have often asserted from the best authority, the law has not left a power in the crown to force any money, except sterling, upon the subject; much less can the crown devolve such a power upon another.

This I speak with the utmost respect to the person and dignity of his excellency the Lord Carteret, whose character was lately given me by a gentleman that has known him from his first appearance in the world. That gentleman describes him as a young man of great accomplishments, excellent learning, regular in his life, and of much spirit and vivacity. He has since, as I have heard, been employed abroad; was principal secretary of state; and is now about the thirty-seventh year of his age appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland. From such a governor, this kingdom may reasonably hope for as much prosperity, as, under so many discouragements, it can be capable of receiving.

It is true indeed, that within the memory of man, there have been governors of so much dexterity, as to carry points of terrible consequence to this kingdom, by

* Lord Carteret, afterward Earl Granville. F

their power with those who are in office; and by their arts in managing or deluding others with oaths, affability, and even with dinners. If Wood's brass had, in those times, been upon the anvil, it is obvious enough to conceive what methods would have been taken. Depending persons would have been told in plain terms, "that it was a service expected from them, under the pain of the public business being put into more complying hands." Others would be allured by promises. To the country gentlemen, beside good words, burgundy, and closeting, it might perhaps have been hinted, "how kindly it would be taken to comply with a royal patent, although it were not compulsory: that if any inconveniencies ensued, it might be made up with other graces or favours hereafter: that gentlemen ought to consider whether it were prudent or safe to disgust England. They would be desired to think of some good bills for encouraging of trade, and setting the poor to work; some farther acts against popery, and for uniting protestants." There would be solemn engagements, "that we should never be troubled with above forty thousand pounds in his coin, and all of the best and weightiest sort, for which we should only give our manufactures in exchange, and keep our gold and silver at home. Perhaps a seasonable report of some invasion would have been spread in the most proper juncture; which is a great smoother of rubs in public proceedings: and we should have been told, "that this was no time to create differences, when the kingdom was in danger."

These, I say, and the like methods, would, in corrupt times, have been taken, to let in this deluge of brass among us; and I am confident, even then, would not have succeeded; much less under the administration of so excellent a person as the lord CARTERET: and in a country where the people of all ranks, parties and de-

nominations, are convinced to a man, that the utter undoing of themselves and their posterity for ever, will be dated from the admission of that execrable coin: that if it once enters, it can be no more confined to a small or moderate quantity, than a plague can be confined to a few families; and that no equivalent can be given by any earthly power, any more than a dead carcass can be recovered to life by a cordial.

There is one comfortable circumstance in this universal opposition to Mr. Wood, that the people sent over hither from England, to fill up our vacancies, ecclesiastical, civil, and military, are all on our side. Money, the great divider of the world, has, by a strange revolution, been the great uniter of a most divided people. Who would leave a hundred pounds a year in England (a country of freedom) to be paid a thousand in Ireland out of Wood's exchequer? The gentleman they have lately made primate,* would never quit his seat in an English house of lords, and his preferments at Oxford and Bristol, worth twelve hundred pounds a year, for four times the denomination here, but not half the value; therefore I expect to hear he will be as good an Irishman, at least upon this one article, as any of his brethren, or even of us, who have had the misfortune to be born in this island. For those, who in the common phrase do not come hither to learn the language, would never change a better country for a worse, to receive brass instead of gold.

Another slander spread by Wood and his emissaries, is, "that by opposing him, we discover an inclination to throw off our dependence upon the crown of England." Pray observe how important a person is this same William Wood; and how the public weal of two kingdoms

* Dr. Hugh Boulter. F.

is involved in his private interest. First, all those who refuse to take his coin are papists; for he tells us, "that none but papists are associated against him." Secondly, "they dispute the king's prerogative." Thirdly, "they are ripe for rebellion." And, fourthly, "they are going to shake off their dependence upon the crown of England;" that is to say, they are going to choose another king; for there can be no other meaning in this expression, however some may pretend to strain it.

And this gives me an opportunity of explaining, to those who are ignorant, another point, which has often swelled in my breast. Those who come over hither to us from England, and some weak people among ourselves, whenever in discourse we make mention of liberty and property, shake their heads, and tell us, that "Ireland is a depending kingdom,"* as if they would seem by this phrase to intend, that the people of Ireland are in some state of slavery or dependence different from those of England: whereas a depending kingdom is a modern term of art, unknown as I have heard to all ancient civilians, and writers upon government; and Ireland is, on the contrary, called in some statutes "an imperial crown," as held only from God; which is as high a style as any kingdom is capable of receiving. Therefore, by this expression, "a depending kingdom," there is no more to be understood, than that by a statute made here in the thirty-third year of Henry VIII. the king, and his successors, are to be kings imperial of this realm, as united and knit to the imperial crown of England. I have looked over all the English and Irish statutes, without finding any law that makes Ireland depend upon England, any more than England does upon Ire-

* This is another of the passages selected for prosecution. N

land. We have indeed obliged ourselves to have the same king with them; and consequently they are obliged to have the same king with us. For the law was made by our own parliament; and our ancestors then were not such fools (whatever they were in the preceding reign) to bring themselves under I know not what dependence, which is now talked of, without any ground of law, reason, or common sense.

Let whoever thinks otherwise, I, M. B. Drapier, desire to be excepted: for I declare, next under God, I depend only on the king my sovereign, and on the laws of my own country. And I am so far from depending upon the people of England, that if they should ever rebel against my sovereign (which God forbid) I would be ready, at the first command from his majesty, to take arms against them, as some of my countrymen did against theirs at Preston. And if such a rebellion should prove so successful as to fix the pretender on the throne of England, I would venture to transgress that statute so far, as to lose every drop of my blood to hinder him from being King of Ireland.*

It is true indeed, that within the memory of man, the parliaments of England have sometimes assumed the power of binding this kingdom by laws enacted there; wherein they were at first openly opposed (as far as truth, reason, and justice are capable of opposing) by the famous Mr. Molineux, an English gentleman born here, as well as by several of the greatest patriots and best whigs in England; but the love and torrent of power prevailed. Indeed the arguments on both sides were invincible. For, in reason, all government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery: but in fact, eleven men well armed will cer-

* This paragraph gave great offence. See Letter V. F.

tainly subdue one single man in his shirt. But I have done: for those who have used power to cramp liberty, have gone so far as to resent even the liberty of complaining; although a man upon the rack was never known to be refused the liberty of roaring as loud as he thought fit.

And as we are apt to sink too much under unreasonable fears, so we are too soon inclined to be raised by groundless hopes, according to the nature of all consumptive bodies like ours. Thus it has been given about for several days past, that somebody in England empowered a second somebody, to write to a third somebody here, to assure us that we should no more be troubled with these halfpence. And this is reported to have been done by the same person,* who is said to have sworn some months ago, "that he would ram them down our throats," though I doubt they would stick in our stomachs: but whichever of these reports be true or false, it is no concern of ours. For, in this point, we have nothing to do with English ministers: and I should be sorry to leave it in their power to redress this grievance, or to enforce it; for the report of the committee has given me a surfeit. The remedy is wholly in your own hands; and therefore I have digressed a little, in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised among you; and to let you see, that by the laws of GOD, of NATURE, of NATIONS, and of your COUNTRY, you ARE and OUGHT to be AS FREE a people as your brethren in England.

If the pamphlets published at London by Wood and his journeymen, in defence of his cause, were reprinted here, and our countrymen could be persuaded to read them, they would convince you of his wicked design,

* Mr. Walpole, afterward Earl of Orford. F.

more than all I shall ever be able to say. In short, I make him a perfect saint, in comparison of what he appears to be, from the writings of those whom he hires to justify his project. But he is so far master of the field (let others guess the reason) that no London printer dare publish any paper written in favour of Ireland: and here nobody as yet has been so bold as to publish any thing in favour of him.

There was, a few days ago, a pamphlet sent me of near fifty pages, written in favour of Mr. Wood and his coinage, printed in London: it is not worth answering, because probably it will never be published here. But it gave me occasion to reflect upon an unhappiness we lie under, that the people of England are utterly ignorant of our case; which, however, is no wonder, since it is a point they do not in the least concern themselves about, farther than perhaps as a subject of discourse in a coffee-house, when they have nothing else to talk of. For I have reason to believe, that no minister ever gave himself the trouble of reading any papers written in our defence, because I suppose their opinions are already determined, and are formed wholly upon the reports of Wood and his accomplices; else it would be impossible that any man could have the impudence to write such a pamphlet as I have mentioned.

Our neighbours, whose understandings are just upon a level with ours, (which perhaps are none of the brightest) have a strong contempt for most nations, but especially for Ireland. They look upon us as a sort of savage Irish, whom our ancestors conquered several hundred years ago. And if I should describe the Britons to you as they were in Cæsar's time, when they painted their bodies, or clothe themselves with the skins of beasts, I should act full as reasonably as they do. However, they are so far to be excused in relation to the present

subject, that hearing only one side of the cause, and having neither opportunity nor curiosity to examine the other, they believe a lie merely for their ease; and conclude, because Mr. Wood pretends to power, he has also reason on his side.

Therefore, to let you see how this case is represented in England by Wood and his adherents, I have thought it proper to extract out of that pamphlet, a few of those notorious falsehoods, in point of fact and reasoning, contained therein; the knowledge whereof will confirm my countrymen in their own right sentiments, when they will see, by comparing both, how much their enemies are in the wrong.

First, the writer positively asserts, "that Wood's halfpence were current among us for several months, with the universal approbation of all people, without one single gainsayer; and we all to a man, thought ourselves happy in having them."

Secondly, he affirms, "that we were drawn into dislike of them only by some cunning, evil designing men among us, who opposed this patent of Wood to get another for themselves."

Thirdly, "that those who most declared at first against Wood's patent, were the very men who intend to get another for their own advantage."

Fourthly, "that our parliament and privy council, the lord mayor and aldermen of Dublin, the grand juries and merchants, and, in short, the whole kingdom, nay, the very dogs," as he expresses it, "were fond of those halfpence, till they were inflamed by those few designing persons aforesaid."

Fifthly, he says directly, "that all those who opposed the halfpence, were papists, and enemies to king George."

Thus far I am confident, the most ignorant among you, can safely swear, from your own knowledge, that the author is a most notorious liar in every article; the direct contrary being so manifest to the whole kingdom, that, if occasion required, might get it confirmed under five hundred thousand hands.

Sixthly, he would persuade us, "that if we sell five shillings worth of our goods or manufactures for two shillings and four pence worth of copper, although the copper were melted down, and that we could get five shillings in gold and silver for the said goods; yet to take the said two shillings and four pence in copper, would be greatly for our advantage."

And, lastly, he makes us a very fair offer, as empowered by Wood, "that if we will take off two hundred thousand pounds in his halfpence for our goods, and likewise pay him three per cent. interest for thirty years for a hundred and twenty thousand pounds (at which he computes the coinage above the intrinsic value of the copper) for the loan of his coin, he will after that time give us good money for what halfpence will be then left."

Let me place this offer in as clear a light as I can, to show the insupportable villany and impudence of that incorrigible wretch. "First," says he, "I will send two hundred thousand pounds of my coin into your country: the copper I compute to be, in real value, eighty thousand pounds, and I charge you with a hundred and twenty thousand pounds for the coinage; so that you see, I lend you a hundred and twenty thousand pounds for thirty years; for which you shall pay me three per cent. that is to say, three thousand six hundred pounds per annum, which in thirty years will amount to a hundred and eight thousand pounds. And

when these thirty years are expired, return me my copper and I will give you good money for it."

This is the proposal made to us by Wood in that pamphlet, written by one of his commissioners: and the author is supposed to be the same infamous Coleby, one of his under swearers at the committee of council, who was tried for robbing the treasury here, where he was an under clerk.

By this proposal, he will first, receive two hundred thousand pounds in goods or sterling, for as much copper as he values at eighty thousand pounds, but in reality not worth thirty thousand pounds. Secondly, he will receive for interest a hundred and eight thousand pounds: and when our children come thirty years hence to return his halfpence upon his executors (for before that time he will be probably gone to his own place) those executors will very reasonably reject them as raps and counterfeits, which they will be, and millions of them of his own coinage.

Methinks I am fond of such a dealer as this, who mends every day upon our hands like a Dutch reckoning; wherein if you dispute the unreasonableness and exorbitance of the bill, the landlord shall bring it up every time with new additions.

Although these, and the like pamphlets, published by Wood in London, are altogether unknown here, where nobody could read them without as much indignation as contempt would allow; yet I thought it proper to give you a specimen how the man employs his time, where he rides alone without any creature to contradict him; while our FEW FRIENDS there wonder at our silence: and the English in general, if they think of this matter at all, impute our refusal to wilfulness or disaffection, just as Wood and his hirelings are pleased to represent.

But although our arguments are not suffered to be printed in England, yet the consequence will be of little moment. Let Wood endeavour to persuade the people there, that we ought to receive his coin; and let me convince our people here, that they ought to reject it, under pain of our utter undoing; and then let him do his best and his worst.

Before I conclude, I must beg leave, in all humility, to tell Mr. Wood that he is guilty of great indiscretion, by causing so honourable a name as that of Mr. Walpole, to be mentioned so often, and in such a manner, upon this occasion. A short paper printed at Bristol, and reprinted here, reports Mr. Wood to say, "that he wonders at the impudence and insolence of the Irish in refusing his coin, and what he will do when Mr. Walpole comes to town." Where, by the way, he is mistaken; for it is the true English people of Ireland who refuse it, although we take it for granted, that the Irish will do so too whenever they are asked. In another printed paper of his contriving, it is roundly expressed, "that Mr. Walpole will cram his brass down our throats." Sometimes it is given out, "that we must either take those halfpence, or eat our brogues:" and in another newsletter, but of yesterday, we read, "that the same great man has sworn to make us swallow his coin in fireballs."

This brings to my mind the known story of a Scotchman, who receiving the sentence of death with all the circumstances of hanging, beheading, quartering, embowelling, and the like, cried out, "What need all this Cookery?" And I think we have reason to ask the same question; for, if we believe Wood, here is a dinner getting ready for us; and you see the bill of fare; and I am sorry the drink was forgot, which might easily be supplied with melted lead and flaming pitch.

What vile words are these to put into the mouth of a great counsellor, in high trust with his majesty, and looked upon as a prime minister? If Mr. Wood has no better a manner of representing his patrons, when I come to be a great man, he shall never be suffered to attend at my levee. This is not the style of a great minister; it savours too much of the kettle and the furnace, and came entirely out of Wood's forge.

As for the threat of making us eat our brogues, we need not be in pain; for, if his coin should pass, that unpolite covering for the feet would no longer be a national reproach; because then we should have neither shoe nor brogue left in the kingdom. But here the falsehood of Mr. Wood is fairly detected; for I am confident Mr. Walpole never heard of a brogue in his whole life.

As to "swallowing these halfpence in fireballs," it is a story equally improbable. For, to execute this operation, the whole stock of Mr. Wood's coin and metal must be melted down, and moulded into hollow balls with wildfire, no bigger than a reasonable throat may be able to swallow. Now, the metal he has prepared, and already coined, will amount to at least fifty millions of halfpence to be swallowed by a million and a half of people: so that, allowing two halfpence to each ball, there will be about seventeen balls of wildfire apiece to be swallowed by every person in the kingdom; and to administer this dose, there cannot be conveniently fewer than fifty thousand operators, allowing one operator to every thirty; which, considering the squeamishness of some stomachs, and the peevishness of young children, is but reasonable. Now, under correction of better judgments, I think the trouble and charge of such an experiment would exceed the profit; and therefore I take this report to be spurious, or, at least, only a new scheme of Mr. Wood himself; which, to make it pass the better in Ireland, he would father upon a minister of state.

But I will now demonstrate, beyond all contradiction, that Mr. Walpole is against this project of Mr. Wood, and is an entire friend to Ireland, only by this one invincible argument; that he has the universal opinion of being a wise man, an able minister, and in all his proceedings pursuing the true interest of the king his master; and that as his integrity is above all corruption, so is his fortune above all temptation. I reckon, therefore, we are perfectly safe from that corner, and shall never be under the necessity of contending with so formidable a power, but be left to possess our brogues and potatoes in peace, as remote from thunder as we are from Jupiter.* I am, my dear countrymen,

Your loving fellow subject,

fellow sufferer, and humble servant,

M. B.

* "Procul à Jove, procul à fulmine."

SEASONABLE ADVICE

TO THE

GRAND JURY,

CONCERNING THE BILL PREPARING AGAINST THE PRINTER OF THE DRAPIER'S FOURTH LETTER.

Nov. 11, 1724.

SINCE a bill is preparing for the grand jury to find against the printer of the Drapier's last letter, there are several things maturely to be considered by those gentlemen before they determine upon it.

First, they are to consider, that the author of the said pamphlet did write three other discourses on the same subject, which, instead of being censured, were universally approved by the whole nation, and were allowed to have raised and continued that spirit among us, which has hitherto kept out Wood's coin; for all men will grant, that if those pamphlets had not been written, his coin must have overrun the nation some months ago.

Secondly, it is to be considered, that this pamphlet, against which a proclamation has been issued, is written by the same author: that nobody ever doubted the innocence and goodness of his design; that he appears, through the whole tenor of it, to be a loyal subject to his majesty, and devoted to the house of Hanover, and declares himself in a manner peculiarly zealous against the

pretender. And if such a writer, in four several treatises on so nice a subject, where a royal patent is concerned, and where it was necessary to speak of England and of liberty, should in one or two places happen to let fall an inadvertent expression, it would be hard to condemn him after all the good he had done, especially when we consider, that he could have no possible design in view either of honour or profit, but purely the GOOD of his COUNTRY.

Thirdly, it ought to be well considered, whether any one expression in the said pamphlet be really liable to a just exception, much less to be found "wicked, malicious, seditious, reflecting upon his majesty and his ministry," &c.

The two points in that pamphlet, which it is said the prosecutors intend chiefly to fix on, are, first, where the author mentions the penner of the king's answer. First, it is well known his majesty is not master of the English tongue; and therefore it is necessary that some other person should be employed to pen what he has to say, or write in that language. Secondly, his majesty's answer is not in the first person, but in the third. It is not said, WE ARE CONCERNED, or OUR ROYAL PREDECESSORS; but HIS MAJESTY is concerned, and HIS ROYAL PREDECESSORS. By which it is plain, these are properly not the words of his majesty; but supposed to be taken from him, and transmitted hither by one of his ministers. Thirdly, it will be easily seen, that the author of the pamphlet delivers his sentiments upon this particular with the utmost caution and respect, as any impartial reader will observe.

The second paragraph, which it is said will be taken notice of as a motive to find the bill, is what the author

says of Ireland's being a dependent kingdom: he explains all the dependence he knows of, which is a law made in Ireland, whereby it is enacted, "that whoever is king of England shall be king of Ireland." Before this explanation be condemned, and the bill found upon it, it would be proper that some lawyers should fully inform the jury what other law there is, either statute or common, for this dependency; and if there be no law, there is no transgression.

The fourth thing very maturely to be considered by the jury, is, what influence their finding the bill may have upon the kingdom: the people in general find no fault in the Drapier's last book, any more than in the three former; and therefore, when they hear it is condemned by a grand jury of Dublin, they will conclude it is done in favour of Wood's coin; they will think we of this town have changed our minds, and intend to take those halfpence, and therefore that it will be in vain for them to stand out: so that the question comes to this, Which will be of the worst consequence, to let pass one or two expressions, at the worst only unwary, in a book written for the public service; or to leave a free open passage for Wood's brass to overrun us, by which we shall be undone for ever?

The fifth thing to be considered is, that the members of the grand jury, being merchants and principal shopkeepers, can have no suitable temptation offered them, as a recompense for the mischief they will do and suffer by letting in this coin; nor can be at any loss or danger by rejecting the bill. They do not expect any employments in the state, to make up in their own private advantages the destruction of their country; whereas those, who go about to advise, entice, or threaten them to find that bill, have great employments which they have a

mind to keep, or to get greater; as it was likewise the case of all those who signed the proclamation to have the author prosecuted. And therefore it is known, that his grace the Lord Archbishop of Dublin, so renowned for his piety, and wisdom, and love of his country, absolutely refused to condemn the book or the author.

Lastly, it ought to be considered what consequence the finding of the bill may have upon a poor man, perfectly innocent; I mean the printer. A lawyer may pick out expressions, and make them liable to exception, where no other man is able to find any. But how can it be supposed that an ignorant printer can be such a critic? He knew the author's design was honest, and approved by the whole kingdom: he advised with friends, who told him there was no harm in the book, and he could see none himself: it was sent him in an unknown hand; but the same in which he received the three former. He and his wife have offered to take their oaths that they knew not the author. And therefore, to find a bill that may bring punishment upon the innocent, will appear very hard, to say no worse. For it will be impossible to find the author, unless he will please to discover himself; although I wonder he ever concealed his name: but I suppose what he did at first out of modesty, he continues to do out of prudence. God protect us and him.

I will conclude all with a fable ascribed to Demosthenes. He had served the people of Athens with great fidelity in the station of an orator; when, upon a certain occasion, apprehending to be delivered over to his enemies, he told the Athenians, his countrymen, the following story: Once upon a time the wolves desired a league with the sheep, upon this condition; that the cause of strife might be taken away, which was the shepherds

and mastiffs: this being granted, the wolves, without all fear, made havoc of the sheep.*

* Copies of this paper were distributed to every person of the grand jury the evening before the bill was to be exhibited; who, probably for the reasons contained in it, refused to find the bill, upon which the lord chief justice Whitshed, who had presided at a former prosecution of the Dean's printer, discharged them in a rage. The following extract was soon after published, to show the illegality of this proceeding; and the next grand jury that was impanneled made the subsequent presentment against all the abettors of Wood's project. See the letter to Lord Molesworth, p. 190 of this volume.

EXTRACT FROM A BOOK,

ENTITLED,

" AN EXACT COLLECTION OF THE DEBATE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, HELD AT WESTMINSTER,

OCTOBER 21, 1680." PAGE 150.

Resolutions of the House of Commons in England,

November 13, 1680.

SEVERAL persons being examined about the dismissing a grand jury in Middlesex, the house came to the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the discharging of a grand jury by any judge, before the end of the term, assizes, or sessions, while matters are under their consideration, and not presented, is arbitrary, illegal, destructive to public justice, a manifest violation of his oath, and is a means to subvert the fundamental laws of this kingdom.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to examine the proceedings of the judges in Westminster-hall; and report the same, with their opinion herein, to this house.

THE

PRESENTMENT

OF THE

GRAND JURY OF THE COUNTY OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

WHEREAS several great quantities of base metal coined, commonly called *Wood's halfpence*, have been brought into the port of Dublin, and lodged in several houses of this city, with an intention to make them pass clandestinely among his majesty's subjects of this kingdom; notwithstanding the addressess of both houses of parliament, and the privy council, and the declarations of most of the corporations of this city against the said coin: And whereas his majesty has been graciously pleased to leave his loyal subjects of this kingdom at liberty to take or refuse the said halfpence;

We the grand jury of the county of the city of Dublin, this Michaelmas term, 1724, having entirely at heart his majesty's interest, and the welfare of our country, and being thoroughly sensible of the great discouragements which trade hath suffered by the apprehensions of the said coin, whereof we have already felt the dismal effects; and that the currency thereof will inevitably tend to the great diminution of his majesty's revenue, and the ruin of us and our posterity, do present all such persons as have attempted, or shall endeavour by fraud, or otherwise, to impose the said halfpence upon us, contrary to his majesty's most gracious intentions, as enemies to his majesty's government, and to the safety, peace, and welfare of all his majesty's subjects of this kingdom;

whose affections have been so eminently distinguished by their zeal to his illustrious family, before his happy accession to the throne, and by their continued loyalty ever since.

As we do, with all just gratitude, acknowledge the services of all such patriots as have been eminently zealous for the interest of his majesty and this country, in detecting the fraudulent imposition of the said Wood, and preventing the passing of his base coin; so we do, at the same time, declare our abhorrence and detestation of all reflections on his majesty and his government; and that we are ready with our lives and fortunes to defend his most sacred majesty against the pretender, and all his majesty's open and secret enemies both at home and abroad.

Given under our hands at the grand jury chamber, this 28th of November, 1724.

George Forbes,	David Tew,
William Empson,	Thomas How,
Nathaniel Pearson,	John Jones,
Joseph Nuttall,	James Brown,
William Aston,	Charles Lyndon,
Stearn Tighe,	Jerom Bredin,
Richard Walker,	John Sican,
Edmond French,	Anthony Brunton,
John Vereilles,	Thomas Gaven,
Philip Pearson,	Daniel Elwood,
Thomas Robins,	John Brunet.
Richard Dawson,	

LETTER V.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORD VISCOUNT MOLESWORTH.

"They compassed me about also with words of deceit, and fought against me without a cause.
For my love they are my adversaries; but I give myself unto prayer.
And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love." Psalm cix. 3, 4, 5.

"Seek not to be judge, being not able to take away iniquity; lest at any time thou fear the person of the mighty, and lay a stumbling-block in the way of thy uprightness.
Offend not against the multitude of a city, and then thou shalt cast not thyself down among the people.
Bind not one sin upon another, for in one thou shalt not be unpunished." Eccl. vii. 6, 7, 8.

Non jam prima peto Mnestheus, neque vincere certo:
Quanquam O!—sed superent, quibus hoc, Neptune, dedisti.

DIRECTIONS TO THE PRINTER.

From my Shop in St. Francis-street,
Dec. 24, 1724.

MR. HARDING,

WHEN I sent you my former papers, I cannot say I intended you either good or hurt; and yet you have happened, through my means, to receive both. I pray God deliver you from any more of the latter, and increase the former. Your trade, particularly in this kingdom, is, of all others, the most unfortunately circumstantiated; for as you deal in the most worthless kind of trash, the penny productions of pennyless scribblers; so you often venture your liberty, and sometimes your lives, for the purchase of half a crown; and, by your own ignorance, are punished for other men's actions.

I am afraid, you in particular think you have reason to complain of me, for your own and your wife's confinement in prison, to your great expense, as well as hardship; and for a prosecution still impending. But I will tell you, Mr. Harding, how that matter stands. Since the press has lain under so strict an inspection, those who have a mind to inform the world are become so cautious, as to keep themselves, if possible, out of the way of danger. My custom, therefore, is to dictate to a prentice, who can write in a feigned hand; and what is written we send to your house by a black-guard boy. But, at the same time,

I do assure you upon my reputation, that I never did send you any thing for which I thought you could possibly be called to an account. And you will be my witness, that I always desired you, by letter, to take some good advice before you ventured to print; because I knew the dexterity of dealers in the law, at finding out something to fasten on, where no evil is meant. I am told, indeed, that you did accordingly consult several very able persons, and even some who afterward appeared against you: to which I can only answer, that you must either change your advisers, or determine to print nothing that comes from a Drapier.

I desire you will send the enclosed letter directed "to my Lord Viscount Molesworth, at his house at Brackdenstown, near Swords;" but I would have it sent printed, for the convenience of his lordship's reading; because this counterfeit hand of my prentice is not very legible. And if you think fit to publish it, I would have you first get it read over by some notable lawyer. I am assured, you will find enough of them, who are friends to the Drapier, and will do it without a fee; which I am afraid you can ill afford after all your expenses. For, although I have taken so much care, that I think it impossible to find a topic out of the following papers for sending you again to prison, yet I will not venture to be your guarantee.

This ensuing letter contains only a short account of myself, and an humble apology for my former pamphlets, especially the last; with little mention of Mr. Wood, or his halfpence; because I have already said enough upon that subject, until occasion shall be given

for new fears; and, in that case, you may perhaps hear from me again.

I am,

Your friend and servant,

M. B.

P. S. For want of intercourse between you and me, which I never will suffer, your people are apt to make very gross errors in the press, which I desire you will provide against.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LORD VISCOUNT MOLESWORTH,

AT HIS HOUSE AT BRACKENSTOWN NEAR SWORDS.

Erom my Shop in St. Francis-street,
Dec. 14, 1724.

MY LORD,

I REFLECT too late on the maxim of common observers, "that those who meddle in matters out of their calling, will have reason to repent;" which is now verified in me: for, by engaging in the trade of a writer, I have drawn upon myself the displeasure of the government, signified by a proclamation promising a reward of three hundred pounds to the first faithful subject who shall be able and inclined to inform against me; to which I may add, the laudable zeal and industry of my lord chief justice Whitshed, in his endeavours to discover so dangerous a person. Therefore, whether I repent or not, I have certainly cause to do so; and the common observation still stands good.

It will sometimes happen, I know not how, in the course of human affairs, that a man shall be made liable to legal animadversion, where he has nothing to answer for, either to God or his country; and condemned at Westminster hall, for what he will never be charged with at the day of judgment.

After strictly examining my own heart, and consulting some divines of great reputation, I cannot accuse my-

self of any malice or wickedness against the public; of any designs to sow sedition; of reflecting on the king and his ministers: or of endeavouring to alienate the affections of the people of this kingdom from those of England.* All I can charge myself with, is a weak attempt to serve a nation in danger of destruction, by a most wicked and malicious projector, without waiting until I were called to its assistance. Which attempt, however it may perhaps give me the title of *pragmatical* and *overweening*, will never lie a burden upon my conscience. God knows whether I may not, with all my caution, have already run myself into a second danger, by offering thus much in my own vindication. For I have heard of a judge, who, upon the criminal's appeal to the dreadful day of judgment, told him, he had incurred a *premunire*, for appealing to a foreign jurisdiction; and of another in Wales, who severely checked the prisoner for offering the same plea; taxing him with "reflecting on the court by such a comparison; because comparisons were odious."

But, in order to make some excuse for being more speculative than others of my condition, I desire your lordship's pardon, while I am doing a very foolish thing; which is, to give you some little account of myself.

I was bred at a free-school, where I acquired some little knowledge in the Latin tongue. I served my apprenticeship in London, and there set up for myself with good success; until, by the death of some friends, and misfortunes of others, I returned into this kingdom; and began to employ my thoughts in cultivating the woollen manufacture through all its branches; wherein I met with great discouragement, and powerful opposers, whose

* Articles mentioned in the indictment and proclamation. F.

objections appeared to me very strange and singular. They argued, "that the people of England would be offended, if our manufactures were brought to equal theirs;" and even some of the weaving trade were my enemies; which I could not but look upon as absurd and unnatural. I remember your lordship, at that time, did me the honour to come into my shop, where I showed you a piece of black and white stuff just sent from the dyer;* which you were pleased to approve of, and be my customer for.

However, I was so mortified, that I resolved for the future to sit quietly in my shop, and deal in common goods, like the rest of my brethren; until it happened some months ago, considering with myself, that the lower and poorer sort of people wanted a plain, strong, coarse stuff, to defend them against cold easterly winds, which then blew very fierce and blasting for a long time together; I contrived one on purpose, which sold very well all over the kingdom, and preserved many thousands from agues. I then made a second and a third kind of stuffs† for the gentry, with the same success; insomuch, that an ague has hardly been heard of for some time.

This incited me so far, that I ventured upon a fourth piece‡ made of the best Irish wool I could get; and I thought it grave and rich enough to be worn by the best lord or judge of the land. But of late some great folks complain, as I hear, "that when they had it on, they felt a shuddering in their limbs;" and have thrown it off in a rage; cursing to Hell the poor Drapier, who invented it: so that I am determined never to work for

* By this is meant, the Proposal for the universal Use of Irish Manufactures, at the beginning of this volume. N.

† The Drapier's first three letters. F.

‡ The fourth letter, against which the proclamation was issued. F

persons of quality again; except for your lordship, and a very few more.

I assure your lordship, upon the word of an honest citizen, that I am not richer, by the value of one of Mr. Wood's halfpence, with the sale of all the several stuffs I have contrived: for, I give the whole profit to the dyers and pressers.* And therefore I hope you will please to believe, that no other motive, beside the love of my country, could engage me to busy my head and hands, to the loss of my time, and the gain of nothing but vexation and ill will.

I have now in hand one piece of stuff to be woven on purpose for your lordship; although I might be ashamed to offer it to you, after I have confessed that it will be made only from the shreds and remnants of the wool employed in the former. However, I shall work it up as well as I can; and at worst, you need only give it among your tenants.

I am very sensible how ill your lordship is likely to be entertained, with the pedantry of a Drapier in the terms of his own trade. How will the matter be mended, when you find me entering again, although very sparingly, into an affair of state? for such is now grown the controversy with Mr. Wood, if some great lawyers are to be credited. And as it often happens at play, that men begin with farthings, and go on to gold, till some of them lose their estates and die in jail; so it may possibly fall out in my case, that by playing too long with Mr. Wood's halfpence, I may be drawn in to pay a fine double to the reward for betraying me; be sent to prison, and not be delivered thence until I shall have paid the uttermost farthing.

* Printers. F.

There are, my lord, three sorts of persons, with whom I am resolved never to dispute; a highwayman with a pistol at my breast; a troop of dragoons, who come to plunder my house; and a man of the law, who can make a merit of accusing me. In each of these cases, which are almost the same, the best method is to keep out of the way; and the next best is, to deliver your money, surrender your house, and confess nothing.

I am told, that the two points in my last letter, from which an occasion of offence has been taken, are, where I mention his majesty's answer to the address of the house of lords upon Mr. Wood's patent; and where I discourse upon Ireland's being a dependent kingdom. As to the former, I can only say, that I have treated it with the utmost respect and caution: and I thought it necessary to show where Wood's patent differed in many essential parts from all others that ever had been granted; because the contrary had, for want of due information, been so strongly and so largely asserted. As to the other, of Ireland's dependency; I confessed to have often heard it mentioned, but was never able to understand what it meant. This gave me the curiosity to inquire among several eminent lawyers, who professed they knew nothing of the matter. I then turned over all the statutes of both kingdoms, without the least information, farther than an Irish act, that I quoted, of the 33d of Henry VIII. uniting Ireland to England under one king. I cannot say I was sorry to be disappointed in my search, because it is certain, I could be contented to depend only upon God and my prince, and the laws of my own country, after the manner of other nations. But since my betters are of a different opinion, and desire farther dependencies, I shall outwardly submit; yet still insisting, in my own heart, upon the exception I made of M. B. Drapier. Indeed,

that hint was borrowed from an idle story I had heard in England, which perhaps may be common and beaten; but because it insinuates neither treason nor sedition, I will just barely relate it.

Some hundred years ago, when the peers were so great that the commons were looked upon as little better than their dependents, a bill was brought in for making some new additions to the power and privileges of the peerage. After it was read, one Mr. Drewe,* a member of the house, stood up, and said, he very much approved the bill, and would give his vote to have it pass; but however, for some reasons best known to himself, he desired that a clause might be inserted for excepting the family of the Drewes. The oddness of the proposition taught others to reflect a little; and the bill was thrown out.

Whether I were mistaken, or went too far in examining the dependency, must be left to the impartial judgment of the world, as well as to the courts of judicature; although, indeed, not in so effectual and decisive a manner. But to affirm, as I hear some do, in order to countenance a fearful and servile spirit, that this point did not belong to my subject, is a false and foolish objection. There were several scandalous reports industriously spread by Wood and his accomplices, to discourage all opposition against his infamous project. They gave it out, "that we were prepared for a rebellion; that we disputed the king's prerogative, and were shaking off our dependency." The first went so far, and obtained so much belief against the most visible demonstrations to the contrary, that a great person of this kingdom, now in England, sent over such an account of

* Francis Drewe, Esq. of the Grange, county Devon; one of the representatives in parliament for the city of Exeter in 1713-1734. N.

known use and signification in this kingdom; and the very lawyers pretend to understand and have them often in their mouths. These were the errors which have misled me; and to which alone I must impute the severe treatment I have received. But I shall in time grow wiser, and learn to consider my driver, and the road I am in, and with whom I am yoked. This I will venture to say; that the boldest and most obnoxious words I ever delivered, would, in England, have only exposed me as a stupid fool, who went to prove that the sun shone in a clear summer's day: and I have witnesses ready to depose, that your lordship has said and writ fifty times worse; and what is still an aggravation, with infinitely more wit and learning, and stronger arguments: so that, as politics run, I do not know a person of more exceptionable principles than yourself; and if ever I shall be discovered, I think you will be bound in honour to pay my fine, and support me in prison; or else I may chance to inform against you by way of reprisal.

In the mean time I beg your lordship to receive my confession; that if there be any such thing as a dependency of Ireland upon England, otherwise than as I have explained it, either by the law of God, of nature, of reason, of nations, or of the land, (which I shall die rather than grant) then was the proclamation against me the most merciful that ever was put out; and instead of accusing me as malicious, wicked, and seditious, it might have been directly as guilty of high treason.

All I desire is, that the cause of my country against Mr. Wood may not suffer by any inadvertency of mine. Whether Ireland depends upon England, or only upon God, the king, and the law; I hope no man will assert, that it depends upon Mr. Wood. I should be heartily sorry that this commendable spirit against me should accidentally (and what, I hope, was never intended) strike

a damp upon that spirit in all ranks and corporations of men against the desperate and ruinous design of Mr. Wood. Let my countrymen blot out those parts in my last letter, which they dislike; and let no rust remain on my sword, to cure the wounds I have given to our most mortal enemy. When Sir Charles Sedley was taking the oaths, where several things were to be renounced, he said, "he loved renouncing;" asked "if any more were to be renounced; for he was ready to renounce as much as they pleased." Although I am not so thorough a renouncer, yet let me have but good city security against this pestilent coinage, and I shall be ready not only to renounce every syllable in all my four letters, but to deliver them cheerfully with my own hands into those of the common hangman, to be burnt with no better company than the coiner's effigies, if any part of it has escaped out of the secular hands of my faithful friends, the common people.*

But, whatever the sentiments of some people may be, I think it is agreed that many of those who subscribed against me, are on the side of a vast majority in the kingdom, who opposed Mr. Wood; and it was with great satisfaction that I observed some right honourable names very amicably joined with my own, at the bottom of a strong declaration against him and his coin. But if the admission of it among us be already determined, the worthy person, who is to betray me, ought in prudence to do it with all convenient speed; or else it may be difficult to find three hundred pounds sterling for the discharge of his hire, when the public shall have lost five hundred thousand, if there be so much in the nation; beside four fifths of its annual income for ever.

* This passage is cited by Dr. Campbell, in his "Philosophy of Rhetoric," as a very strong example of commendation, couched with great delicacy under an air of reproach. N.

I am told by lawyers, that in quarrels between man and man, it is of much weight, which of them gave the first provocation or struck the first blow. It is manifest that Mr. Wood has done both: and therefore I should humbly propose to have him first hanged, and his dross thrown into the sea: after which, the Drapier will be ready to stand his trial. "It must needs be that offences come, but wo unto him by whom the offence comes." If Mr. Wood had held his hand, every body else would have held their tongues: and then there would have been little need of pamphlets, juries, or proclamations upon this occasion. The provocation must needs have been very great, which could stir up an obscure, indolent Drapier, to become an author. One would almost think, the very stones in the street would rise up in such a cause: and I am not sure they will not do so against Mr. Wood, if ever he comes within their reach. It is a known story of the dumb boy, whose tongue forced a passage for speech by the horror of seeing a dagger at his father's throat. This may lessen the wonder, that a tradesman, hid in privacy and silence, should cry out, when the life and being of his political mother are attempted before his face, and by so infamous a wretch.

But in the mean time Mr. Wood, the destroyer of a kingdom, walks about in triumph (unless it be true, that he is in jail for debt) while he, who endeavoured to assert the liberty of his country, is forced to hide his head for occasionally dealing in a matter of controversy. However, I am not the first who has been condemned to death, for gaining a great victory over a powerful enemy, by disobeying for once the strict orders of military discipline.

I am now resolved to follow (after the usual proceeding of mankind, because it is too late) the advice given

me by a certain Dean.* He showed the mistake I was in, of trusting to the general good will of the people; "that I had succeeded hitherto better than could be expected; but that some unfortunate circumstantial lapse would bring me within the reach of power: that my good intentions would be no security against those who watched every motion of my pen in the bitterness of my soul." He produced an instance of "a person as innocent, as disinterested, and as well-meaning as myself; who had written a very seasonable and inoffensive treatise, exhorting the people of this kingdom to wear their own manufactures;† for which, however, the printer was prosecuted with the utmost virulence; the jury sent back nine times; and the man given up to the mercy of the court." The Dean farther observed, "that I was in a manner left alone to stand the battle; while others who had ten thousand times better talents than a Drapier, were so prudent as to lie still; and perhaps thought it no unpleasant amusement to look on with safety, while another was giving them diversion at the hazard of his liberty and fortune; and thought they made a sufficient recompense by a little applause. Whereupon he concluded with a short story of a Jew at Madrid: who being condemned to the fire on account of his religion, a crowd of schoolboys following him to the stake, and apprehending they might lose their sport if he should happen to recant, would often clap him on the back, and cry, "*Sta firme, Moyse*; Moses, continue steadfast."

I allow this gentleman's advice to have been very good, and his observations just; and in one respect, my condition is worse than that of the Jew; for no recanta-

* The author is supposed to mean himself. F.

† The author means himself again; in the discourse advising the people of Ireland to wear their own manufactures. F.

tion will save me. However, it should seem by some late proceedings, that my state is not altogether deplorable. This I can impute to nothing but the steadiness of two impartial grand juries; which has confirmed in me an opinion I have long entertained; that, as philosophers say, virtue is seated in the middle; so, in another sense, the little virtue left in the world, is chiefly to be found among the middle rank of mankind, who are neither allured out of her paths by ambition, nor driven by poverty.

Since the proclamation occasioned by my last letter, and a due preparation for proceeding against me in a court of justice, there have been two printed papers clandestinely spread about; whereof no man is able to trace the original, farther than by conjecture; which, with its usual charity, lays them to my account. The former is entitled, "Seasonable Advice," and appears to have been intended for information of the grand jury, upon the supposition of a bill to be prepared against that letter. The other, is an extract from a printed book of parliamentary proceedings, in the year 1680; containing an angry resolution of the house of commons in England, against dissolving grand juries. As to the former, your lordship will find it to be the work of a more artful hand than that of a common Drapier. It has been censured for endeavouring to influence the minds of a jury, which ought to be wholly free and unbiassed; and for that reason it is manifest, that no judge was ever known, either upon, or off the bench, either by himself, or his dependants, to use the least insinuation, that might possibly affect the passions or interests of any one single juryman, much less of a whole jury; whereof every man must be convinced, who will just give himself the trouble to dip into the common printed trials: so as it is amazing to think, what a number of upright judges there have

been in both kingdoms, for above sixty years past; which, considering how long they held their offices during pleasure, as they still do among us, I account next to a miracle.

As to the other paper, I must confess it is a sharp censure from an English house of commons against dissolving grand juries, by any judge, before the end of the term, assizes, or sessions, while matters are under their consideration, and not presented; as arbitrary, illegal, destructive to public justice, a manifest violation of his oath, and as a means to subvert the fundamental laws of the kingdom.

However, the publisher seems to have been mistaken in what he aimed at. For whatever dependence there may be of Ireland upon England, I hope he would not insinuate, that the proceedings of a lord chief justice in Ireland, must depend upon a resolution of an English house of commons. Besides, that resolution, although it were levelled against a particular lord chief justice, Sir William Scroggs, yet the occasion was directly contrary. For Scroggs dissolved the grand jury of London for fear they should present; but ours in Dublin was dissolved, because they would not present; which wonderfully alters the case. And therefore a second grand jury supplied that defect, by making a presentment* that pleased the whole kingdom. However, I think it is agreed by all parties, that both the one and the other jury, behaved themselves in such a manner, as ought to be remembered to their honour, while there shall be any regard left among us for virtue or public spirit.

I am confident your lordship will be of my sentiments in one thing; that some short plain authentic tract might be published for the information both of petty and grand

* See the Presentment immediately preceding this letter. N.

juries, how far their power reaches, and where it is limited; and that a printed copy of such a treatise might be deposited in every court, to be consulted by the jurymen, before they consider of their verdict; by which, abundance of inconveniences would be avoided, whereof innumerable instances might be produced from former times; because I will say nothing of the present.

I have read somewhere of an eastern king, who put a judge to death for an iniquitous sentence, and ordered his hide to be stuffed into a cushion, and placed upon the tribunal for the son to sit on, who was preferred to his father's office. I fancy such a memorial might not have been unuseful to a son of Sir William Scroggs, and that both he and his successors would often wriggle in their seats, as long as the cushion lasted: I wish the relator had told us what number of such cushions there might be in that country.

I cannot but observe to your lordship, how nice and dangerous a point it is grown, for a private person to inform the people even in an affair where the public interest and safety are so highly concerned, as that of Mr. Wood; and this in a country where loyalty is woven into the very hearts of the people, seems a little extraordinary. Sir William Scroggs was the first who introduced that commendable acuteness into the courts of judicature; but how far this practice has been imitated by his successors, or strained upon occasion, is out of my knowledge. When pamphlets unpleasing to the ministry were presented as libels, he would order the offensive paragraphs to be read before him; and he was often so very happy in applying the initial letters of names, and expounding dubious hints (the two common expedients among writers of that class for escaping the law) that he discovered much more than ever the authors intended; as many of them, or their printers, found to their cost.

If such methods are to be followed in examining what I have already written, or may write hereafter, upon the subject of Mr. Wood, I defy any man of fifty times my understanding and caution to avoid being entrapped: unless he will be content to write what none will read, by repeating over the old arguments and computations, whereof the world is already grown weary. So that my good friend Harding lies under this dilemma; either to let my learned works hang for ever drying upon his lines; or venture to publish them at the hazard of being laid by the heels.

I need not tell your lordship where the difficulty lies. It is true, that the king and the laws permit us to refuse this coin of Mr. Wood; but at the same time it is equally true, that the king and the laws permit us to receive it. Now, it is barely possible, that the ministers in England may not suppose the consequences of uttering that brass among us, to be so ruinous as we apprehend; because perhaps if they understood it in that light, they would in common humanity, use their credit with his majesty for saving a most loyal kingdom from destruction. But, as long as it shall please those great persons to think that coin will not be so very pernicious to us, we lie under the disadvantage of being censured as obstinate in not complying with a royal patent. Therefore nothing remains but to make use of that liberty, which the king and the laws have left us, by continuing to refuse this coin; and by frequent remembrances to keep up that spirit raised against it, which otherwise may be apt to flag, and perhaps in time to sink altogether. For, any public order against receiving or uttering Mr. Wood's halfpence, is not reasonably to be expected in this kingdom, without directions from England; which I think no body presumes, or is so sanguine as to hope.

But to confess the truth, my lord, I begin to grow weary of my office as a writer; and could heartily wish it were devolved upon my brethren, the makers of songs and ballads, who perhaps are the best qualified at present to gather up the gleanings of this controversy. As to myself, it has been my misfortune to begin, and pursue it, upon a wrong foundation. For, having detected the frauds and falsehoods of this vile impostor Wood in every part, I foolishly disdained to have recourse to whining, lamenting, and crying for mercy; but rather chose to appeal to law and liberty, and the common rights of mankind, without considering the climate I was in.

Since your last residence in Ireland, I frequently have taken my nag to ride about your grounds; where I fancied myself to feel an air of freedom breathing round me; and I am glad the low condition of a tradesman did not qualify me to wait on you at your house; for then, I am afraid, my writings would not have escaped severer censures. But I have lately sold my nag, and honestly told his greatest fault, which was that of snuffing up the air about Brackdenstown; whereby he became such a lover of liberty, that I could scarce hold him in. I have likewise buried at the bottom of a strong chest your lordship's writings under a heap of others, that treat of liberty; and spread over a layer or two of Hobbes, Filmer, Bodin, and many more authors of that stamp, to be readiest at hand, whenever I shall be disposed to take up a new set of principles in government. In the mean time I design quietly to look to my shop, and keep as far out of your lordship's influence as possible: and if you ever see any more of my writings on this subject, I promise you shall find them as innocent, as insipid, and without a sting, as what I have now offered you. But, if your lordship will please to

give me an easy lease of some part of your estate in Yorkshire, thither will I carry my chest: and turning it upside down, resume my political reading where I left off; feed on plain homely fare, and live and die a free honest English farmer; but not without regret for leaving my countrymen under the dread of the brazen talons of Mr. Wood: my most loyal and innocent countrymen; to whom I owe so much for their good opinion of me, and my poor endeavours to serve them. I am with the greatest respect, my lord,

Your lordship's most obedient,
and most humble servant,
M. B.

*** These papers (for the sixth and seventh letters were not published till long afterward) prevailed, notwithstanding threats, prosecutions, and imprisonments, against all the influence of power, and all the artifices of cunning: persons of every sect united with the Drapier in the common cause, his health was a perpetual toast, and his effigies were displayed in every street; Wood was compelled to withdraw his patent, and his halfpence were totally suppressed. H.

LETTER VI.

TO THE

LORD CHANCELLOR MIDDLETON.*

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1724.

* He signed the proclamation against the Drapier. F.

*** By many passages in the following letter, and by the date, Oct. 6, 1724, it appears to have been written soon after the proclamation against the Drapier for his fourth letter, and before the jury had thrown out the bill of indictment. At this crisis perhaps the Dean did not choose to resume a character which was become obnoxious, and therefore wrote in his own. The original was signed with his name, though it appeared to have been obliterated by another hand; for some reason the publication of it was delayed, and it was first printed in an edition of the Dean's works published at Dublin in 1735. This, however, is not the only reason why it is placed after the fifth letter; for the fifth letter appears to have been substituted in its stead, and not intended to follow it. The fourth letter, both in this and in the fifth, is called *the last*, which could not have happened if both had been parts of the same series.

The reader will now easily account for those passages in the sixth by which the prosecution against Harding appears to be depending, though in the fifth it is mentioned as past.*

* This advertisement is an epitome of the preface to the Irish edition of the Drapier's Sixth Letter. H.

LETTER VI.

TO THE

LORD CHANCELLOR MIDDLETON.

Deanery-house, Oct. 1724.

MY LORD,

I DESIRE you will consider me as a member, who comes in at the latter end of a debate; or as a lawyer who speaks to a cause when the matter has been almost exhausted by those who spoke before.

I remember, some months ago, I was at your house upon a commission, where I am one of the governors; but I went thither, not so much on account of the commission, as to ask you some questions concerning Mr. Wood's patent to coin halfpence for Ireland; where you very freely told me in a mixt company, how much you had been always against that wicked project;* which raised in me an esteem for you so far, that I went in a few days to make you a visit, after many years intermission. I am likewise told, that your son wrote two letters from London (one of which I have seen) empowering those, to whom they were directed, to assure his friends, that whereas there was a malicious report spread of his engaging himself to Mr. Walpole for forty thousand pounds of Wood's coin to be received in Ireland, the said re-

* Lord Middleton, though he signed the proclamation against the Drapier, was an enemy to Wood's project, according to several passages in these letters. H.

port was false and groundless; and he had never discoursed with that minister on this subject, nor would ever give his consent to have one farthing of the said coin current here. And although it be a long time since I have given myself the trouble of conversing with people of titles or stations; yet I have been told by those who can take up with such amusements, that there is not a considerable person of the kingdom scrupulous in any sort to declare his opinion. But all this is needless to allege, when we consider, that the ruinous consequences of Wood's patent have been so strongly represented by both houses of parliament; by the privy council; the lord mayor and aldermen of Dublin; by so many corporations; and the concurrence of the principal gentlemen in most counties at their quarter sessions, without any regard to party, religion, or nation.

I conclude from hence, that the currency of these halfpence would, in the universal opinion of our people, be utterly destructive to this kingdom; and consequently that it is every man's duty not only to refuse this coin himself, but as far as in him lies, to persuade others to do the like: and whether this be done in private or in print, is all a case; as no layman is forbidden to write, or to discourse upon religious or moral subjects, although he may not do it in a pulpit, at least in our church. Neither is this an affair of state, until authority shall think fit to declare it so; or if you should understand it in that sense, yet you will please to consider, that I am not now preaching.

Therefore I do think it my duty, since the Drapier will probably be no more heard of, so far to supply his place, as not to incur his fortune; for I have learned from old experience, that there are times wherein a man ought to be cautious, as well as innocent. I therefore hope, that preserving both those characters, I may be al-

lowed, by offering new arguments, or enforcing old ones, to refresh the memory of my fellow-subjects, and keep up that good spirit raised among them, to preserve themselves from utter ruin by lawful means, and such as are permitted by his majesty.

I believe you will please to allow me two propositions: first, that we are a most loyal people; and secondly, that we are a free people, in the common acceptation of that word, applied to a subject under a limited monarch. I know very well, that you and I did, many years ago, in discourse, differ much, in the presence of Lord Wharton, about the meaning of that word *liberty*, with relation to Ireland. But, if you will not allow us to be a free people, there is only another appellation left, which I doubt, my Lord Chief Justice Whitshed would call me to account for, if I venture to bestow: for I observed (and I shall never forget upon what occasion) the device upon his coach to be, *libertas et natale solum*, at the very point of time when he was sitting in his court, and perjuring himself to betray both.

Now, as for our loyalty to his present majesty, if it has ever been equalled in any other part of his dominions, I am sure it has never been exceeded: and I am confident he has not a minister in England, who could ever call it once in question; but that some hard rumours at least have been transmitted from the other side of the water, I suppose you will not doubt: and rumours of the severest kind; which many good people have imputed to the indirect proceeding of Mr. Wood and his emissaries; as if he endeavoured it should be thought, that our loyalty depended upon the test of refusing or taking his copper. Now, as I am sure you will admit us to be a loyal people, so you will think it pardonable in us to hope for all proper marks of favour and protection from so gracious a king, that a loyal and free people can ex-

pect: among which, we all agree in reckoning this to be one; that Wood's halfpence may never have entrance into this kingdom. And this we shall continue to wish, when we dare no longer express our wishes; although there were no such mortal as a drapier in the world.

I am heartily sorry, that any writer should, in a cause so generally approved, give occasion to the government and council to charge him with paragraphs "highly reflecting upon his majesty and his ministers; tending to alienate the affections of his good subjects in England and Ireland from each other; and to promote sedition among the people." I must confess that with many others, I thought he meant well; although he might have the failing of better writers, not to be always fortunate in the manner of expressing himself.

However, since the Drapier is but one man, I shall think I do a public service by asserting, that the rest of my countrymen are wholly free from learning out of his pamphlets to reflect on the king or his ministers, and to breed sedition.

I solemnly declare, that I never once heard the least reflection cast upon the king, on the subject of Mr. Wood's coin: for in many discourses on this matter, I do not remember his majesty's name to be so much as mentioned. As to the ministry in England, the only two persons hinted at, were, the Duke of Grafton and Mr. Walpole: the former, as I have heard you and a hundred others affirm, declared "that he never saw the patent in favour of Mr. Wood, before it was passed," although he was then lord lieutenant: and therefore I suppose every body believes that his grace has been wholly unconcerned in it ever since.

Mr. Walpole was indeed supposed to be understood by the letter W. in several newspapers; where it is said that some expressions fell from him not very favourable

to the people of Ireland; for the truth of which the kingdom is not to answer, any more than for the discretion of the publishers. You observe, the Drapier wholly clears Mr. Walpole of this charge by very strong arguments; and speaks of him with civility. I cannot deny myself to have been often present, where the company gave their opinion that Mr. Walpole favoured Mr. Wood's projects, which I always contradicted; and for my own part never once opened my lips against that minister, either in mixed or particular meetings; and my reason for this reservedness was, because it pleased him in the queen's time (I mean queen Anne of ever blessed memory) to make a speech directly against me by name, in the house of commons, as I was told a very few minutes after, in the court of requests, by more than fifty members.

But you, who are in a great station here (if any thing here may be called great) cannot be ignorant, that whoever is understood by public voice to be chief minister, will, among the general talkers, share the blame, whether justly or not, of every thing that is disliked; which I could easily make appear in many instances from my own knowledge, while I was in the world; and particularly in the case of the greatest, the wisest, and the most uncorrupt minister I ever conversed with.*

But whatever unpleasing opinion some people might conceive of Mr. Walpole, on account of those halfpence, I dare boldly affirm it was entirely owing to Mr. Wood. Many persons of credit come from England, have affirmed to me and others, that they have seen letters under his hand, full of arrogance and insolence toward Ireland, and boasting of his favour with Mr. Walpole; which is highly probable; because he reasonably thought

* Supposed to be the Lord Treasurer Oxford. H.

it for his interest to spread such a report, and because it is the known talent of low and little spirits, to have a great man's name perpetually in their mouths.

Thus I have sufficiently justified the people of Ireland from learning any bad lesson out of the Drapier's pamphlets, with regard to his majesty and his ministers: and therefore, if those prayers were intended to sow sedition among us, God be thanked the seeds have fallen upon a very improper soil.

As to alienating the affections of the people of England and Ireland from each other; I believe the Drapier, whatever his intentions were, has left that matter just as he found it.

I have lived long in both kingdoms, as well in country as in town; and therefore take myself to be as well informed, as most men, in the dispositions of each people toward the other. By the people, I understand here, only the bulk of the common people; and I desire no lawyer may distort or extend my meaning.

There is a vein of industry and parsimony that runs through the whole people of England, which, added to the easiness of their rents, makes them rich and sturdy. As to Ireland, they know little more of it than they do of Mexico: farther than that it is a country subject to the King of England, full of bogs, inhabited by wild Irish papists, who are kept in awe by mercenary troops sent from thence: and their general opinion is, that it were better for England if this whole island were sunk into the sea: for they have a tradition, that every forty years there must be a rebellion in Ireland. I have seen the grossest suppositions passed upon them: "that the wild Irish were taken in toils; but that in some time they would grow so tame as to eat out of your hands:" I have been asked by hundreds, and particularly by my neighbours, your tenants at Pepper-hara, "whether I

had come from Ireland by sea:" and, upon the arrival of an Irishman to a country town, I have known crowds coming about him, and wondering to see him look so much better than themselves.

A gentleman now in Dublin affirms, "that, passing some months ago through Northampton, and finding the whole town in a flurry, with bells, bonfires, and illuminations; upon asking the cause, he was told that it was for joy that the Irish had submitted to receive Wood's halfpence." This, I think, plainly shows what sentiments that large town has of us; and how little they made it their own case; although they lie directly in our way to London, and therefore cannot but be frequently convinced that we have human shapes.

As to the people of this kingdom, they consist either of Irish papists, who are as inconsiderable, in point of power, as the women and children; or of English protestants, who love their brethren of that kingdom, although they may possibly sometimes complain when they think they are hardly used: however, I confess, I do not see that it is of any great consequence, how their personal affections stand to each other, while the sea divides them, and while they continue in their loyalty to the same prince. And yet I will appeal to you, whether those from England have reason to complain, when they come hither in pursuit of their fortunes? or, whether the people of Ireland have reason to boast, when they go to England upon the same design?

My second proposition was, that we of Ireland are a free people: this, I suppose, you will allow, at least with certain limitations remaining in your own breast. However, I am sure it is not criminal to affirm it; because the words liberty and property, as applied to the subject, are often mentioned in both houses of parliament, as well as in yours and other courts below: whence it must

follow that the people of Ireland do, or ought to enjoy all the benefits of the common and statute law: such as to be tried by juries, to pay no money without their own consent as represented in parliament, and the like. If this be so, and if it be universally agreed that a free people cannot by law be compelled to take any money in payment, except gold and silver; I do not see why any man should be hindered from cautioning his countrymen against this coin of William Wood: who is endeavouring by fraud to rob us of that property, which the laws have secured. If I am mistaken, and this copper can be obtruded on us, I would put the Drapier's case in another light, by supposing that a person going into his shop should agree for thirty shillings worth of goods, and force the seller to take his payment in a parcel of copper pieces intrinsically not worth above a crown: I desire to know whether the Drapier would not be actually robbed of five-and-twenty shillings; and how far he could be said to be master of his property? The same question may be applied to rents and debts on bond or mortgage, and to all kind of commerce, whatsoever.

Give me leave to do, what the Drapier has done more than once before me, which is, to relate the naked fact, as it stands in the view of the world.

One William Wood, Esq. a hardwareman, obtains by fraud a patent in England to coin 108,000l. in copper, to pass in Ireland, leaving us liberty to take or to refuse. The people here, in all sorts of bodies and representatives, do openly and heartily declare, that they will not accept this coin: to justify these declarations, they generally offer two reasons; first, because by the words of the patent they are left to their own choice; and secondly, because they are not obliged by law: so that you see there is *bellum atque virum*, a kingdom on one side,

and William Wood on the other. And if Mr. Wood gets the victory at the expense of Ireland's ruin, and the profit of one or two hundred thousand pounds (I mean by continuing and counterfeiting as long as he lives) for himself; I doubt, both present and future ages will at least think it a very singular scheme.

If this fact be truly stated, I must confess, I look upon it as my duty, so far as God has enabled me, and as long as I keep within the bounds of truth, of duty, and of decency, to warn my fellow subjects, as they value their king, their country, and all that ought or can be dear to them, never to admit this pernicious coin; no not so much as one single halfpenny. For if one single thief forces the door, it is in vain to talk of keeping out the whole crew behind.

And while I shall be thus employed, I will never give myself leave to suppose, that what I say can either offend my lord lieutenant, whose person and great qualities I have always highly respected, (as I am sure his excellency will be my witness) or the ministers in England, with whom I have nothing to do, or they with me; much less the privy council here; who, as I am informed, did send an address to his majesty against Mr. Wood's coin; which if it be a mistake, I desire I may not be accused for a spreader of false news: but I confess, I am so great a stranger to affairs, that, for any thing I know, the whole body of the council may since have been changed: and although I observe some of the very same names in a late declaration against that coin, which I saw subscribed to the proclamation against the Drapier, yet possibly they may be different persons: for they are utterly unknown to me, and are likely to continue so.

In this controversy, where the reasoners on each side are divided by St. George's channel, his majesty's pre-

rogative perhaps would not have been mentioned, if Mr. Wood and his advocates had not made it necessary, by giving out that the currency of his coin should be enforced by a proclamation. The traders and common people of the kingdom were heartily willing to refuse this coin; but the fear of a proclamation brought along with it most dreadful apprehensions. It was therefore absolutely necessary for the Drapier to remove this difficulty; and accordingly, in one of his former pamphlets, he produced invincible arguments (wherever he picked them up) that the king's prerogative was not at all concerned in the matter; since the law had sufficiently provided against any coin to be imposed on the subject, except gold and silver; and that copper is not money, but, as it has been properly called, *nummorum famulus*.

The three former letters from the Drapier having not received any public censure, I look upon them to be without exception; and that the good people of the kingdom ought to read them often, in order to keep up that spirit raised against this destructive coin of Mr. Wood. As for this last letter, against which a proclamation is issued; I shall only say, that I could wish it were stripped of all that can be any way objectionable; which I would not think it below me to undertake, if my abilities were equal; but, being naturally somewhat slow of comprehension, no lawyer, and apt to believe the best of those who profess good designs, without any visible motive either of profit or honour; I might pore for ever, without distinguishing the cockle from the corn.

That which I am told gives the greatest offence in this last letter, is, where the Drapier affirms, "that, if a rebellion should prove so successful as to fix the pre-

tender on the throne of England, he would venture so far to transgress the Irish statute, which unites Ireland to England under one king, as to lose every drop of his blood to hinder him from being king of Ireland."

I shall not presume to vindicate any man, who openly declares he would transgress a statute; and a statute of such importance: but, with the most humble submission, and desire of pardon for a very innocent mistake, I should be apt to think, that the loyal intention of the writer, might be at least some small extenuation of his crime; for in this I confess myself to think with the Drapier.

I have not been hitherto told of any other objections against that pamphlet; but I suppose, they will all appear at the prosecution of the Drapier. And I think, whoever in his own conscience believes the said pamphlet to be "wicked and malicious, seditious and scandalous, highly reflecting upon his majesty and his ministers," &c. would do well to discover the author (as little a friend as I am to the trade of informers) although the reward of 300*l.* had not been tacked to the discovery. I own, it would be a great satisfaction to me to hear the arguments not only of judges, but of lawyers upon this case. Because you cannot but know, there often happen occasions, wherein it would be very convenient that the bulk of the people should be informed how they ought to conduct themselves; and therefore it has been the wisdom of the English parliaments to be very reserved in limiting the press. When a bill is debating in either house of parliament there, nothing is more usual, than to have the controversy handled by pamphlets on both sides, without the least animadversion upon the authors.

So here, in the case of Mr. Wood and his coin; since the two houses gave their opinion by addresses, how

dangerous the currency of that copper would be to Ireland, it was, without all question, both lawful and convenient, that the bulk of the people should be let more particularly into the nature of the danger they were in, and of the remedies that were in their own power, if they would have the sense to apply them; and this cannot be more conveniently done, than by particular persons, to whom God has given zeal and understanding sufficient for such an undertaking. Thus it happened in the case of that destructive project for a bank in Ireland, which was brought into parliament a few years ago; and it was allowed, that the arguments and writings of some without doors, contributed very much to reject it.

Now I should be heartily glad, if some able lawyers would prescribe the limits, how far a private man may venture in delivering his thoughts upon public matters: because a true lover of his country, may think it hard to be a quiet stander by, and an indolent looker on, while a public error prevails, by which a whole nation may be ruined. Every man who enjoys property, has some share in the public; and therefore the care of the public is, in some degree, every such man's concern.

To come to particulars; I could wish to know, whether it be utterly unlawful in any writer so much as to mention the prerogative; at least so far as to bring it into doubt upon any point whatsoever: I know it is often debated in Westminster hall; and Sir Edward Coke, as well as other eminent lawyers, do frequently handle that subject in their books.

Secondly, how far the prerogative extends to force coin upon the subject, which is not sterling; such as lead, brass, copper, mixt metal, shells, leather, or any other

material; and fix upon it whatever denomination the crown shall think fit?

Thirdly, what is really and truly meant by that phrase of a "depending kingdom," as applied to Ireland, and wherein that dependency consists?

Lastly, in what points relating to liberty and property, the people of Ireland differ, or at least ought to differ, from those of England.

If these particulars were made so clear that none could mistake them, it would be of infinite ease and use to the kingdom; and either prevent, or silence all discontents.

My Lord Somers, the greatest man I ever knew of your robe, and whose thoughts of Ireland differed as far as heaven and earth from those of some others among his brethren here, lamented to me, that the prerogative of the crown, or the privileges of parliament, should ever be liable to dispute in any single branch of either; by which means, he said, the public often suffered great inconveniences, whereof he gave me several instances. I produce the authority of so eminent a person, to justify my desires that some high points might be cleared.

For want of such known ascertainment, how far a writer may proceed in expressing his good wishes for his country, a person of the most innocent intentions may possibly, by the oratory and comments of lawyers, be charged with many crimes, which from his very soul he abhors; and consequently may be ruined in his fortunes, and left to rot among thieves in some stinking jail, merely for mistaking the purlieus of the law. I have known, in my lifetime, a printer prosecuted and convincted for publishing a pamphlet,* where the author's intentions, I am confident, were as good and innocent, as

* "A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures," written by the author. F.

those of a martyr at his last prayers. I did very lately, as I thought it my duty, preach to the people under my inspection upon the subject of Mr. Wood's coin; and although I never heard that my sermon gave the least offence, as I am sure none was intended, yet, if it were now printed and published, I cannot say, I would ensure it from the hands of the common hangman, or my own person from those of a messenger.*

I have heard the late chief justice Holt affirm, that in all criminal cases, the most favourable interpretation should be put upon words, that they can possibly bear. You meet the same position asserted in many trials for the greatest crimes; though often very ill practised by the perpetual corruption of judges. And I remember at a trial in Kent, where Sir George Rook was indicted for calling a gentleman knave and villain, the lawyer for the defendant brought off his client, by alleging that the words were not injurious; for *knave* in the old and true signification imported only a servant; and *villain* in Latin is *villicus*, which is no more than a man employed in country labour, or rather a bailiff.

If Sir John Holt's opinion were a standard maxim for all times and circumstances, any writer, with a very small measure of discretion, might easily be safe; but I doubt, in practice, it has been frequently controlled, at least before his time: for I take it to be an old rule in law.

I have read, or heard a passage of Seignior Gregorio Leti, an Italian, who, being in London, busying himself with writing the History of England, told King Charles the Second, "that he endeavoured as much as he could to avoid giving offence, but found it a thing impossible,

* This Sermon is given in Vol. XIV. under the title "On doing Good, occasioned by Wood's Project." N.

although he should have been as wise as Solomon." The king answered, "that if this were the case, he had better employ his time in writing proverbs, as Solomon did." But Leti lay under no public necessity of writing; neither would England have been one halfpenny the better or the worse whether he writ or not.

This I mention, because I know it will readily be objected, "What have private men to do with the public? what call had a Drapier to turn politician, to meddle in matters of state? would not his time have been better employed in looking to his shop; or his pen, in writing proverbs, elegies, ballads, garlands, and wonders?" He would then have been out of all danger of proclamations and prosecutions. Have we not able magistrates and counsellors hourly watching over the public weal? All this may be true: and yet, when the addresses from both houses of parliament against Mr. Wood's halfpence failed of success, if some pen had not been employed to inform the people how far they might legally proceed in refusing that coin, to detect the fraud, the artifice, and insolence of the coiner, and to lay open the most ruinous consequences to the whole kingdom, which would inevitably follow from the currency of the said coin, I might appeal to many hundred thousand people, whether any one of them would ever have had the courage or sagacity to refuse it.

If this copper should begin to make its way among the common ignorant people, we are inevitably undone. It is they, who give us the greatest apprehension, being easily frighted, and greedy to swallow misinformations; for, if every man were wise enough to understand his own interest, which is every man's principal study, there would be no need of pamphlets upon this occasion: but as things stand, I have thought it absolutely necessary, from my duty to God, my king, and my country, to in-

form the people, that the proclamation lately issued against the Drapier, doth not in the least affect the case of Mr. Wood and his coin; but only refers to certain paragraphs in the Drapier's last pamphlet (not immediately relating to his subject, nor at all to the merits of the cause) which the government was pleased to dislike; so that any man has the same liberty to reject, to write, and to declare against this coin, which he had before: neither is any man obliged to believe, that those honourable persons (whereof you are the first) who signed that memorable proclamation against the Drapier, have at all changed their opinions with regard to Mr. Wood or his coin.

Therefore, concluding myself to be thus far upon a safe and sure foot, I shall continue upon any proper occasion, as God enables me, to revive and preserve that spirit raised in the nation (whether the real author were a real drapier or not is little to the purpose) against this horrid design of Mr. Wood; at the same time carefully watching every stroke of my pen, and venturing only to incur the public censure of the world, as a writer; not of my lord chief justice Whitshed, as a criminal. Whenever an order shall come out by authority, forbidding all men, upon the highest penalties, to offer any thing in writing or discourse against Mr. Wood's halfpence, I shall certainly submit. However, if that should happen, I am determined to be somewhat more than the last man in the kingdom to receive them; because I will never receive them at all; for, although I know how to be silent, I have not yet learned to pay active obedience against my conscience, and the public safety.

I desire to put a case, which I think the Drapier in some of his books has put before me; although not so fully as it requires.

You know the copper halfpence in England are coined by the public; and every piece worth pretty near the value of the copper. Now suppose, that instead of the public coinage, a patent had been granted to some private obscure person, for coining a proportionable quantity of copper in that kingdom, to what Mr. Wood is preparing in this; and all of it at least five times below the intrinsic value: the current money of England is reckoned to be twenty millions; and ours under five hundred thousand pounds: by this computation, as Mr. Wood has power to give us 108,000 pounds; so the patentee in England, by the same proportion, might circulate four millions three hundred and twenty thousand pounds; beside as much more by stealth and counterfeits. I desire to know from you, whether the parliament might not have addressed upon such an occasion; what success they probably would have had, and how many Drapiers would have risen to pester the world with pamphlets? yet that kingdom would not be so great a sufferer as ours in the like case; because their cash would not be conveyed into foreign countries, but lie hid in the chests of cautious thrifty men until better times. Then I desire, for the satisfaction of the public, that you will please to inform me, why this country is treated in so very different a manner in a point of such high importance; whether it be on account of Poining's act; of subordination; dependence; or any other term of art, which I shall not contest, but am too dull to understand.

I am very sensible, that the good or ill success of Mr. Wood, will affect you less than any person of consequence in the kingdom; because I hear you are so prudent as to make all your purchases in England: and truly so would I, if I had money, although I were to pay a hundred years purchase; because I should be glad to possess a freehold, that could not be taken from me by

any law to which I did not give my own consent; and where I should never be in danger of receiving my rents in mixt copper at the loss of sixteen shillings in the pound. You can live in ease and plenty at Pepperhara in Surrey; and therefore I thought it extremely generous and public spirited in you to be of the kingdom's side in this dispute, by showing without reserve your disapprobation of Mr. Wood's design;* at least if you have been so frank to others as you were to me; which indeed I could not but wonder at, considering how much we differ in other points; and therefore I could get but few believers, when I attempted to justify you in this article from your own words.

I would humbly offer another thought, which I do not remember to have fallen under the Drapier's observation. If these halfpence should once gain admittance, it is agreed, that in no longer space of time, what by the clandestine practices of the coiner, what by his own counterfeits, and those of others either from abroad or at home, his limited quantity would be tripled upon us, until there would not be a grain of gold or silver visible in the nation. This, in my opinion, would lay a heavy charge upon the crown, by creating a necessity of transmitting

* "The success of the measure was principally impeded by the unexpected and inflexible opposition of Lord Chancellor Middleton, who has on that account incurred the bitter reproaches of Walpole, Townshend, and the Duke of Grafton, in their correspondence with each other. Upon a candid review of his conduct, however, it appears that he was actuated by no improper motive, but, in common with many other persons in Ireland, considered the plan imprudently introduced, and inimical to the true interests of the country. The private letters which passed between him, his brother, and son, and which I am enabled to lay before the public, will afford a clear explanation of his motives; and a comparison of them with those of the two ministers, and of the Duke of Grafton, relieve the characters of each party from much of that obloquy which flowed from the rage of discordant politics." Coxe, p. 217.

money from England to pay the salaries at least of the principal civil officers; for I do not conceive how a judge (for instance) could support his dignity with a thousand pounds a year in Wood's coin; which would not intrinsically be worth near two hundred. To argue that these halfpence, if no other coin were current, would answer the general ends of commerce among ourselves, is a great mistake; and the Drapier has made that matter too clear to admit an answer, by showing us what every owner of land must be forced to do with the products of it in such a distress. You may read his remarks at large in his second and third letter; to which I refer you.

Before I conclude, I cannot but observe, that for several months past there have more papers been written in this town, such as they are, all upon the best public principle, the love of our country, than perhaps has been known in any other nation in so short a time: I speak in general, from the Drapier down to the maker of ballads; and all without any regard to the common motives of writers; which are profit, favour, and reputation. As to profit, I am assured by persons of credit, that the best ballad upon Mr. Wood will not yield above a groat to the author; and the unfortunate adventurer Harding* declares he never made the Drapier any present, except one pair of scissars. As to favour, whoever thinks to make his court by opposing Mr. Wood, is not very deep in politics. And as to reputation, certainly no man of worth and learning would employ his pen upon so transitory a subject, and in so obscure a corner of the world, to distinguish himself as an author. So that I look upon myself, the Drapier, and my numerous brethren, to be all true patriots in our several degrees.

* The printer of the Drapier's Letters. F.

All that the public can expect for the future, is, only to be sometimes warned to beware of Mr. Wood's halfpence; and to be referred for conviction to the Drapier's reasons. For, a man of the most superior understanding, will find it impossible to make the best use of it, while he writes in constraint; perpetually softening, correcting, or blotting out expressions, for fear of bringing his printer, or himself, under a prosecution from my lord chief justice Whitshed. It calls to my remembrance the madman in Don Quixotte, who, being soundly beaten by a weaver for letting a stone (which he always carried on his shoulder) fall upon a spaniel, apprehended that every cur he met was of the same species.

For these reasons I am convinced, that what I have now written will appear low and insipid; but, if it contributes in the least to preserve that union among us for opposing this fatal project of Mr. Wood, my pains will not be altogether lost.

I sent these papers to an eminent lawyer* (and yet a man of virtue and learning into the bargain) who, after many alterations, returned them back with assuring me that they are perfectly innocent; without the least mixture of treason, rebellion, sedition, malice, disaffection, reflection, or wicked insinuation whatsoever.

If the bellman of each parish, as he goes his circuit, would cry out every night, "Past twelve o'clock; Beware of Wood's halfpence;" it would probably cut off the occasion for publishing any more pamphlets; provided that in country towns it were done upon market

* This "eminent lawyer" was Mr. Robert Lindsay, a polite and elegant scholar, at that time a celebrated pleader at the bar in Dublin, and afterward one of the judges of the court of common pleas, under which title he is named as executor to Dr. Swift's will. An epigram by Mr. Lindsay, with Dr. Swift's answer, first printed in "The Dreamer," are in vol. xi. N.

days. For my own part, as soon as it shall be determined that it is not against law, I will begin the experiment in the liberty of St. Patrick's; and hope my example may be followed in the whole city. But if authority shall think fit to forbid all writings or discourses upon this subject, except such as are in favour of Mr. Wood, I will obey as it becomes me; only, when I am in danger of bursting, I will go and whisper among the reeds, not any reflection upon the wisdom of my countrymen; but only these few words, BEWARE OF WOOD'S HALFPENCE. I am, with due respect,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

J. S.

LETTER VII.

AN

HUMBLE ADDRESS

TO

BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.*

BY M. B. DRAPIER.

"Multa gemens plagasque superbi
Victoris ———."

I HAVE been told, that petitions and addresses, to either king or parliament,† are the right of every subject; provided they consist with that respect, which is due to princes and great assemblies. Neither do I remember, that the modest proposals or opinions of private men have been ill received, when they have not been delivered in the style of advice; which is a presumption far from my thoughts. However, if proposals should be looked upon as too assuming; yet I hope, every man may be suffered to declare his own and the nation's wishes. For instance; I may be allowed to wish, that

* This address is without a date; but it appears to have been written during the first session in Lord Carteret's government, though it did not appear till it was inserted, with the preceding letter, in the Dublin edition of 1735. H.

† It should be—'either to' king or parliament, &c. S.

some farther laws were enacted for the advancement of trade, for the improvement of agriculture, now strangely neglected, against the maxims of all wise nations: for supplying the manifest defects in the acts concerning the plantation of trees; for setting the poor to work; and many others.

Upon this principle I may venture to affirm, it is the hearty wish of the whole nation, very few excepted, that the parliament, in this session, would begin by strictly examining into the detestable fraud of one William Wood, now or late of London, hardwareman; who illegally and clandestinely, as appears by your own votes and addresses, procured a patent in England for coining halfpence in that kingdom to be current here. This, I say, is the wish of the whole nation, very few excepted; and upon account of those few, is more strongly and justly the wish of the rest: those few consisting either of Wood's confederates, some obscure tradesmen, or certain bold UNDERTAKERS, of weak judgment and strong ambition, who think to find their accounts in the ruin of the nation, by securing or advancing themselves. And because such men proceed upon a system of politics, to which I would fain hope you will be always utter strangers, I shall humbly lay it before you.

Be pleased to suppose me in a station of fifteen hundred pounds a year, salary and perquisites; and likewise possessed of 800*l.* a year real estate. Then suppose a destructive project to be on foot; such for instance as this of Wood; which, if it succeed in all the consequences naturally to be expected from it, must sink the rents and wealth of the kingdom one half, although I am confident, it would have done so five sixths: Suppose, I conceive that the countenancing, or privately supporting this project, will please those by whom I expect to be preserved, or higher exalted: nothing then remains, but

to compute and balance my gain and my loss, and sum up the whole. I suppose that I shall keep my employment ten years, not to mention the fair chance of a better. This at 1500*l.* a year amounts in ten years to 15,000*l.* My estate, by the success of the said project, sinks 400*l.* a year; which, at twenty years purchase, is but 8000*l.* so that I am a clear gainer of 7000*l.* upon the balance. And during all that period I am possessed of power and credit, can gratify my favourites, and take vengeance on my enemies. And if the project miscarry, my private merit is still entire. This arithmetic, as horrible as it appears, I knowingly affirm to have been practised and applied, in conjunctures whereon depended the ruin or safety of a nation: although probably the charity and virtue of a senate will hardly be induced to believe, that there can be such monsters among mankind. And yet the wise Lord Bacon mentions a sort of people (I doubt the race is not yet extinct) who would "set a house on fire for the convenience of roasting their own eggs at the flame."

But whoever is old enough to remember, and has turned his thoughts to observe the course of public affairs in this kingdom from the time of the revolution, must acknowledge, that the highest points of interest and liberty have been often sacrificed to the avarice and ambition of particular persons, upon the very principles and arithmetic that I have supposed: the only wonder is, how these artists were able to prevail upon numbers, and influence even public assemblies, to become instruments for effecting their execrable designs.

It is, I think, in all conscience, latitude enough for vice, if a man in station be allowed to act injustice upon the usual principles of getting a bribe, wreaking his malice, serving his party, or consulting his preferment, while his wickedness terminates in the ruin only of particular

persons. But to deliver up our whole country, and every living soul who inhabits it, to certain destruction, has not, as I remember, been permitted by the most favourable casuists on the side of corruption. It were far better, that all who have had the misfortune to be born in this kingdom, should be rendered incapable of holding any employment whatsoever above the degree of a constable (according to the scheme and intention of a great minister* *gone to his own place*) than to live under the daily apprehension of a few false brethren among ourselves. Because, in the former case, we should be wholly free from the danger of being betrayed; since none could then have impudence enough to pretend any public good.

It is true, that in this desperate affair of the new halfpence, I have not heard of any man above my own degree of a shopkeeper, to have been hitherto so bold, as in direct terms to vindicate the fatal project; although I have been told of some very mollifying expressions which were used, and very gentle expedients proposed and handed about, when it first came under debate: but, since the eyes of the people have been so far opened, that the most ignorant can plainly see their own ruin in the success of Wood's attempt, these grand compounders have been more cautious.

But, that the same spirit still subsists, has manifestly appeared (among other instances of great compliance) from certain circumstances, that have attended some late proceedings in a court of judicature. There is not any common place more frequently insisted on by those who treat of our constitution, than the great happiness and excellency of trials by juries; yet, if this blessed part of our law be eludible at pleasure, by the force of power,

* The Earl of Sunderland. H.

frowns, and artifice, we shall have little reason to boast of our advantage in this particular, over other states or kingdoms in Europe. And surely these high proceedings, exercised in a point that so nearly concerned the life-blood of the people, their necessary subsistence, their very food and raiment, and even the public peace, will not allow any favourable appearance; because it was obvious, that so much superabundant zeal could have no other design, or produce any other effect, than to damp that spirit raised in the nation against this accursed scheme of William Wood and his abettors; to which spirit alone we owe, and for ever must owe, our being hitherto preserved, and our hopes of being preserved for the future, if it can be kept up, and strongly countenanced by your wise assemblies. I wish I could account for such a demeanour, upon a more charitable foundation, than that of putting our interest in over balance with the ruin of our country.

I remember some months ago, when this affair was fresh in discourse, a person nearly allied to SOMEBODY, or (as the hawkers called him) NOBODY, who was thought deeply concerned, went about very diligently among his acquaintance, to show the bad consequences that might follow from any public resentment, to the disadvantage of his ally, Mr. Wood; principally alleging the danger of all employments being disposed of from England. One of these emissaries came to me, and urged the same topic: I answered naturally, "that I knew there was no office of any kind, which a man from England might not have if he thought it worth his asking; and that I looked upon all who had the disadvantage of being born here, as only in the conditions of leasers and gleaners." Neither could I forbear mentioning the known fable of "the countryman, who entreated his ass to fly, for fear of being taken by the ene-

my; but the ass refused to give himself that trouble, and upon a very wise reason; because he could not possibly change his present master for a worse: the enemy could not make him fare harder, beat him more cruelly, or load him with heavier burdens."

Upon these, and many other considerations, I may affirm it to be the wish of the whole nation, that the power and privileges of juries were declared, ascertained, and confirmed by the legislature: and that whoever has been manifestly known to violate them, might be stigmatised by public censure; not from any hope that such a censure will amend their practices, or hurt their interest (for it may probably operate quite contrary in both) but that the nation may know their enemies from their friends.

I say not this with any regard or view to myself; for I write in great security; and am resolved that none shall merit at my expense, farther than by showing their zeal to discover, prosecute, and condemn me, for endeavouring to do my duty in serving my country: and yet I am conscious to myself, that I never had the least intention to reflect on his majesty's ministers, nor on any other person, except William Wood, whom I neither did, nor do yet, conceive to be of that number. However, some would have it, that I went too far; but I suppose they will now allow themselves mistaken. I am sure I might easily have gone farther, and I think I could not easily have fared worse. And therefore I was no farther affected with their proclamation, and subsequent proceedings, than a good clergyman is, with the sins of the people. And as to the poor printer, he is now gone to appear before a higher, and before a righteous tribunal.

As my intention is only to lay before your great assemblies the general wishes of the nation; and as I have

already declared it our principal wish, that your first proceeding would be to examine into the pernicious fraud of William Wood; so I must add, as the universal opinion, that all schemes of commutation, composition, and the like expedients, either avowed or implied, will be of the most pernicious consequences to the public; against the dignity of a free kingdom; and prove an encouragement to future adventurers, in the same destructive projects. For it is a maxim, which no man at present disputes, that even a connivance to admit one thousand pounds in these halfpence, will produce, in time, the same ruinous effects, as if we openly consented to admit a million. It were therefore infinitely more safe and eligible to leave things in the doubtful, melancholy state they are at present (which however God forbid) and trust entirely to the general aversion of our people against this coin, using all honest endeavours to preserve, continue, and increase that aversion, than submit to apply those palliatives, which weak, perfidious, or abject politicians, are, upon all occasions, and in all diseases, so ready to administer.

In the small compass of my reading (which however has been more extensive than is usual to men of my inferior calling) I have observed that grievances have always preceded supplies; and if ever grievances had a title to such a pre-eminence, it must be this of Wood; because it is not only the greatest grievance that any country could suffer, but a grievance of such a kind, that if it should take effect, would make it impossible for us to give any supplies at all, except in adulterate copper; unless a tax were laid for paying the civil and military lists, and the large pensions with real commodities instead of money; which however might be liable to some few objections as well as difficulties: for, although the common soldiers might be content with beef

and mutton, and wool, and malt, and leather; yet I am in some doubt as to the generals, the colonels, the numerous pensioners, the civil officers, and others, who all live in England upon Irish pay, as well as those few who reside among us only because they cannot help it.

There is one particular, which although I have mentioned more than once in some of my former papers, yet I cannot forbear to repeat, and a little enlarge upon it; because I do not remember to have read or heard of the like in the history of any age or country; neither do I ever reflect upon it without the utmost astonishment.

After the unanimous addresses to his sacred majesty against the patent of Wood, from both houses of parliament, which are the three estates of the kingdom; and likewise an address from the privy council, to whom, under the chief governors, the whole administration is intrusted; the matter is referred to a committee of council in London. Wood, and his adherents are heard on one side; and a few volunteers, without any trust or direction from hence, on the other. The question (as I remember) chiefly turned upon the want of halfpence in Ireland: witnesses are called on the behalf of Wood, of what credit I have formerly shown; upon the issue, the patent is found good and legal; all his majesty's officers here (not excepting the military) commanded to be aiding and assisting to make it effectual; the addresses of both houses of parliament, of the privy council, and of the city of Dublin, the declarations of most counties and corporations through the kingdom, are altogether laid aside, as of no weight, consequence, or consideration whatsoever; and the whole kingdom of Ireland nonsuited in default of appearance; as if it were a private cause between John Doe, plaintiff, and William Roe, defendant.

With great respect to those honourable persons, the committee of council in London, I have not understood them to be our governors, counsellors, or judges. Neither did our case turn at all upon the question, whether Ireland wanted halfpence. For there is no doubt, but we do want both halfpence, gold, and silver: and we have numberless other wants, and some that we are not so much as allowed to name, although they are peculiar to this nation; to which no other is subject, whom God has blessed with religion and laws, or any degree of soil and sunshine: but for what demerits on our side I am altogether in the dark.

But I do not remember that our want of halfpence was either affirmed, or denied, in any of our addresses or declarations against those of Wood. We alleged the fraudulent obtaining and executing of his patent; the baseness of his metal; and the prodigious sum to be coined, which might be increased by stealth, from foreign importation, and his own counterfeits, as well a those at home; whereby we must infallibly lose all our little gold and silver, and all our poor remainder of a very limited and discouraged trade. We urged, that the patent was passed without the least reference hither; and without mention of any security given by Wood to receive his own halfpence upon demand; both which are contrary to all former proceedings in the like cases. These and many other arguments we offered; but still the patent went on, and at this day our ruin would have been half completed, if God in his mercy had not raised a universal detestation of these halfpence in the whole kingdom, with a firm resolution never to receive them, since we are not under obligations to do so, by any law, either human or divine.

But in the name of God, and of all justice and piety, when the king's majesty was pleased that this patent

should pass, is it not to be understood, that he conceived, believed, and intended it as a gracious act, for the good and benefit of his subjects, for the advantage of a great and fruitful kingdom; of the most loyal kingdom upon earth, where no hand or voice was ever lifted up against him; a kingdom, where the passage is not of three hours from Britain, and a kingdom where papists have less power and less land than in England? can it be denied, or doubted, that his majesty's ministers understood and proposed the same end, the good of this nation, when they advised the passing of this patent? can the person of Wood be otherwise regarded, than as the instrument, the mechanic, the head workman, to prepare his furnace, his fuel, his metal, and his stamps? if I employ a shoeboy, is it in view to his advantage, or to my own convenience? I mention the person of William Wood alone; because no other appears, and we are not to reason upon surmises; neither would it avail, if they had a real foundation.

Allowing therefore (for we cannot do less) that this patent for the coining of halfpence was wholly intended by a gracious king, and a wise public-spirited ministry, for the advantage of Ireland; yet when the whole kingdom to a man, for whose good the patent was designed, do, upon maturest consideration, universally join in openly declaring, protesting, addressing, petitioning against these halfpence, as the most ruinous project that ever was set on foot, to complete the slavery and destruction of a poor innocent country: is it, was it, can it, or will it ever be a question, not, whether such a kingdom, or William Wood, should be a gainer; but whether such a kingdom should be wholly undone, destroyed, sunk, depopulated, made a scene of misery and desolation, for the sake of William Wood? God of his infinite mercy avert this dreadful judgment! and it is

our universal wish, that God would put it into your hearts, to be his instruments for so good a work.

For my own part, who am but one man, of obscure condition, I do solemnly declare, in the presence of Almighty God, that I will suffer the most ignominious and torturing death, rather than submit to receive this accursed coin, or any other that shall be liable to these objections, until they shall be forced upon me by a law of my own country; and, if that shall ever happen, I will transport myself into some foreign land, and eat the bread of poverty among a free people.

Am I legally punishable for these expressions? shall another proclamation issue against me, because I presume to take my country's part against William Wood, where her final destruction is intended? But whenever you shall please to impose silence upon me, I will submit; because I look upon your unanimous voice to be the voice of the nation; and this I have been taught, and do believe, to be in some manner the voice of God.

The great ignominy of a whole* kingdom lying so long at mercy under so vile an adversary, is such a deplorable aggravation, that the utmost expressions of shame and rage are too low to set it forth: and therefore I shall leave it to receive such a resentment, as is worthy of a parliament.

It is likewise our universal wish, that his majesty should grant liberty to coin halfpence in this kingdom for our own use, under such restriction as a parliament here shall advise: since the power of coining even gold and silver, is possessed by every petty prince abroad; and was always practised by Scotland to the very time the union: yet surely Scotland, as to soil, climate,

* It should be,—'of a whole kingdom's lying,' &c. S.

and extent, is not in itself a fourth part of the value of Ireland, for Bishop Burnet says, "it is not above the fortieth part in value to the rest of Britain;" and with respect to the profit that England gains from hence, not the forty thousandth part. Although I must confess, that a mote in the eye, or a thorn in the side, is more dangerous and painful, than a beam or a spike at a distance.

The histories of England, and of most other countries, abound in relating the miserable, and sometimes the most tragical effects from the abuses of coin by debasing the metal, by lessening or enhancing the value upon occasions, to the public loss; of which we have an example within our own memory in England, and another very lately in France. It is the tenderest point of government, affecting every individual in the highest degree. When the value of money is arbitrary or unsettled, no man can well be said to have any property at all; nor is any wound so suddenly felt, so hardly cured, or that leaves such deep and lasting scars behind it.

I conceive this poor unhappy island to have a title to some indulgence from England; not only upon the score of Christianity, natural equity, and the general rights of mankind, but chiefly on account of that immense profit they receive from us; without which, that kingdom would make a very different figure in Europe, from what it does at present.

The rents of land in Ireland, since they have been of late so enormously raised and screwed up, may be computed to about two millions; whereof one third part at least is directly transmitted to those who are perpetual absentees in England; as I find by a computation made with the assistance of several skilful gentlemen.

The other articles, by which we are altogether losers and England a gainer, we found to amount to almost as much more.

I will only set down as many heads of them as I can remember, and leave them to the consideration of those who understand accounts better than I pretend to do.

The occasional absentees, for business, health, or diversion.

Three fourths of the revenue of the chief governor, during his absence; which is usually four fifths of his government.

The whole revenue of the post office.

The numerous pensions paid to persons in England.

The pay of the chief officers of the army absent in England, which is a great sum.

Four commissioners of the revenue, always absent.

Civil employments very numerous, and of great income.

The vast charge of appeals to the house of lords, and to the court of delegates.

Students at the inns of court, and the two universities.

Eighty thousand pounds sent yearly to England for coals: whereof the prime cost is nothing, and therefore the profit wholly theirs.

One hundred thousand pounds paid several years past for corn sent over hither from England; the effect of our own great wisdom in discouraging agriculture.

The kind liberty granted us of wearing Indian stuffs, and calicoes, to gratify the vanity and folly of our women; which, beside the profit to England, is an inconceivable loss to us, forcing the weavers to beg in our streets, or transport themselves to foreign countries.

The prodigious loss to us, and gain to England by selling them all our wool at their own rates; whereof the manufacture exceeds above ten times the prime

cost: a proceeding without example in the christian or heathen world

Our own wool returned upon us in English manufactures, to our infinite shame and damage, and the great advantage of England.

The full profit of all mines accruing to England; an effect of great negligence and stupidity.

An affectation among us of liking all kind of goods made in England.

These and many other articles, which I cannot recollect at present, are agreed by judicious men to amount to near seven hundred thousand pounds *per ann.* clear profit to England.* And upon the whole, let any man look into those authors who write upon the subject of commerce, he shall find, that there is not one single article in the essentials or circumstances of trade, whereby a country can be a loser, which we do not possess in the highest perfection; somewhat in every particular, that bears a kind of analogy to William Wood; and now the branches are all cut off, he stands ready with his axe at the root.

Upon this subject of perpetual absentees I have spent some time in very insignificant reflections; and considering the usual motives of human actions, which are pleasure, profit, and ambition, I cannot yet comprehend how those persons find their account in any of the three. I speak not of those English peers or gentlemen, who, beside their estates at home, have possessions here, for in that case the matter is desperate; but I mean those lords and wealthy knights, or squires, whose birth, and partly

* Many of the above articles have been since particularly computed; in "A List of the Absentees of Ireland, and the yearly Value of their Estates and Incomes spent abroad. By Thomas Prior, Esq." F.

their education, and all their fortune (except some trifle, and that in a very few instances) are in this kingdom. I knew many of them well enough during several years, when I resided in England; and truly I could not discover that the figure they made, was by any means a subject for envy; at least it gave me two very different passions. For, excepting the advantage of going now and then to an opera, or sometimes appearing behind a crowd at court, or adding to the ring of coaches at Hyde Park, or losing their money at the chocolate house, or getting news, votes, and minutes about five days before us in Dublin; I say, beside these, and a few other privileges of less importance, their temptations to live in London were beyond my knowledge or conception. And I used to wonder, how a man of birth and spirit, could endure to be wholly insignificant and obscure in a foreign country, when he might live with lustre in his own; and even at less than half that expense, which he strains himself to make without obtaining any one end, except that which happened to the frog, when he would needs contend for size with the ox. I have been told by scholars, that Cæsar said "he would rather be the first man in I know not what village, than the second in Rome." This perhaps was a thought only fit for Cæsar: but to be preceded by thousands, and neglected by millions; to be wholly without power, figure, influence, honour, credit, or distinction, is not in my poor opinion a very amiable situation of life, to a person of title or wealth, who can so cheaply and easily shine in his native country.

But, beside the depopulating of the kingdom, leaving so many parts of it wild and uncultivated, the ruin of so many country seats and plantations, the cutting down of all the woods to supply expenses in England; the absence of so many noble and wealthy persons, has been the cause of another fatal consequence, which few per-

haps have been aware of. For, if that very considerable number of lords, who possess the amplest fortunes here, had been content to live at home, and attend the affairs of their own country in parliament; the weight, reputation, and dignity thereby added to that noble house, would, in all human probability, have prevented certain proceedings, which are now ever to be lamented, because they never can be remedied: and we might have then decided our own properties among ourselves, without being forced to travel five hundred miles by sea and land to another kingdom for justice, to our infinite expense, vexation, and trouble; which is a mark of servitude without example from the practice of any age or nation in the world.

I have sometimes wondered, upon what motives the peerage of England were so desirous to determine our controversies; because I have been assured, and partly know, that the frequent appeals from hence have been very irksome to that illustrious body: and whoever has frequented the painted chamber and courts of requests, must have observed, that they are never so nobly filled, as when an Irish appeal is under debate.

The peers of Scotland, who are very numerous, were content to reside in their castles and houses in that bleak and barren climate; and although some of them made frequent journies to London, yet I do not remember any of their greatest families, till very lately, to have made England their constant habitation before the union: or, if they did, I am sure it was generally to their own advantage; and whatever they got, was employed to cultivate and increase their own estates; and by that means enrich themselves and their country.

As to the great number of rich absentees under the degree of peers; what particular ill effects their absence may have upon this kingdom, beside those already men-

tioned, may perhaps be too tender a point for me to touch. But whether those who live in another kingdom upon great estates here, and have lost all regard to their own country, farther than upon account of the revenues they receive from it; I say, whether such persons may not be prevailed on to recommend others to vacant seats, who have no interest here except a precarious employment, and consequently can have no views, but to preserve what they have got, or to be higher advanced: this, I am sure, is a very melancholy question, if it be a question at all.

But, beside the prodigious profit which England receives, by the transmittal thither of two thirds of the revenues of this whole kingdom, it has another mighty advantage, by making our country a receptacle, wherein to disburden themselves of their supernumerary pretenders to offices; persons of second rate merit in their own country, who, like birds of passage, most of them thrive and fatten here, and fly off when their credit and employments are at an end. So that Ireland may justly say, what Luther said of himself, POOR Ireland makes many rich.

If amid all our difficulties I should venture to assert, that we have one great advantage, provided we could improve it as we ought, I believe most of my readers would be long in conjecturing what possible advantage could ever fall to our share. However, it is certain, that all the regular seeds of party and faction among us are entirely rooted out; and if any new ones shall spring up, they must be of equivocal generation, without any seed at all: and will justly be imputed to a degree of stupidity, beyond even what we have been ever charged with upon the score of our birth place and climate.

The parties in this kingdom (including those of modern date) are, first, of those who have been charged or suspected to favour the pretender; and those who were zealous opposers of him. Secondly, of those who were for and against a toleration of dissenters by law. Thirdly, of high and low church; or (to speak in the cant of the times) of whig and tory. And fourthly, of court and country. If there be any more, they are beyond my observation or politics: for, as to subaltern or occasional parties, they have been all derivations from the same originals.

Now it is manifest, that all these incitements to faction, party, and division, are wholly removed from among us. For, as to the pretender, his cause is both desperate and obsolete: there are very few now alive, who were men in his father's time, and in that prince's interest; and in all others, the obligations of conscience has no place:* even the papists in general, of any substance or estates, and their priests almost universally, are what we call whigs, in the sense which by that word is generally understood. They feel the smart, and see the scars of their former wounds; and very well know, that they must be made a sacrifice to the least attempts toward a change; although it cannot be doubted that they would be glad to have their superstition restored, under any prince whatsoever.

Secondly, the dissenters are now tolerated by law; neither do we observe any murmurs at present from that quarter, except those reasonable complaints they make of persecution, because they are excluded from civil employments; but their number being very small in either house of parliament, they are not yet in a situation to erect a party: because, however indifferent men may

* The obligations arising from their having sworn allegiance. H.

But notwithstanding all that has been objected by William Wood himself, together with his favourers, abettors. supporters, either public or private; by those who connive at this project, or discountenance his opposers, for fear of lessening their favour, or hazarding their employments; by those who endeavour to damp the spirit of the people, raised against this coin, or check the honest zeal of such, as by their writings or discourses do all they can to keep it up; by those softeners, sweeteners, compounders, and expedientmongers, who shake their heads so strongly that we can hear their pockets jingle; I did never imagine, that in detecting the practices of such enemies to the kingdom, I was flying in the king's face; or thought they were better representers of his majesty, than that very coin, for which they are secret or open advocates.

If I were allowed to recite only those wishes of the nation, which may be in our power to attain, I think they might be summed up in these few following.

First, that an end might be put to our apprehensions of Wood's halfpence, and to any danger of the like destructive scheme for the future.

Secondly, that halfpence might be coined in this kingdom by a public mint, with due limitations.

Thirdly, that the sense of both houses of parliament, at least of the house of commons, were declared by some unanimous and hearty votes, against wearing any silk or woollen manufactures imported from abroad; as likewise against wearing Indian silks or calicoes, which are forbidden under the highest penalties in England: and it behoves us to take example from so wise a nation; because we are under a greater necessity to do so, since we are not allowed to export any woollen manufactures of our own; which is the principal branch of foreign trade in England.

ests of those, who are the greatest gainers by continuing the same measures. And general calamities without hope of redress, are allowed to be the great uniters of mankind.

However we may dislike the causes, yet this effect of begetting a universal concord among us, in all national debates, as well as in cities, corporations, and country neighbourhoods, may keep us at least alive, and in a condition to eat the little bread allowed us, in peace and amity. I have heard of a quarrel in a tavern, where all were at daggers drawing, till one of the company cried out, desiring to know the subject of the quarrel; which when none of them could tell, they put up their swords, sat down, and passed the rest of the evening in quiet. The former part has been our case, I hope the latter will be so too; that we shall sit down amicably together, at least until we have something that may give us a title to fall out, since nature has instructed even a brood of goslings to stick together, while the kite is hovering over their heads.

It is certain, that a firm union in any country, where every man wishes the same thing with relation to the public, may, in several points of the greatest importance, in some measure supply the defect of power, and even of those rights, which are the natural and undoubted inheritance of mankind. If the universal wish of the nation upon any point were declared, by the unanimous vote of the house of commons, and a reasonable number of lords, I should think myself obliged in conscience to act in my sphere according to that vote; because in all free nations, I take the proper definition of law, to be the will of the majority of those who have the property in land; which, if there be a monarchy, is to be confirmed by the royal assent. And although such votes or declarations, have not received such a confirmation for certain

accidental reasons; yet I think they ought to be of much weight with the subject, provided they neither oppose the king's prerogative, endanger the peace of the nation, nor infringe any law already in force; none of which however can reasonably be supposed. Thus for instance, if nine in ten of the house of commons, and a reasonable number of native temporal peers, should declare, that whoever received or uttered brass coin, except under certain limitations and securities, should be deemed as enemies to the king and the nation; I should think it a heinous sin in myself to act contrary to such a vote: and if the same power, should declare the same censure, against those who wore Indian stuffs and calicoes, or woollen manufactures imported from abroad, whereby this nation is reduced to the lowest ebb of misery, I should readily, heartily, and cheerfully pay obedience; and to my utmost power persuade others to do the like: because there is no law of this land obliging us either to receive such coin, or to wear such foreign manufactures.

Upon this last article I could humbly wish, that the reverend the clergy would set us an example, by contenting themselves with wearing gowns and other habiliments of Irish drapery; which, as it would be some incitement to the laity, and set many hands to work, so they would find their advantage in the cheapness, which is a circumstance not to be neglected by too many among that venerable body. And in order to this I could heartily desire that the most ingenious artists of the weaving trade, could contrive some decent stuffs and silk for clergymen at reasonable rates.

I have pressed several of our most substantial brethren, that the whole corporation of weavers in silk and woollen, would publish some proposals (I wish they would do it to both houses of parliament) inviting per-

sons of all degrees, and of both sexes, to wear the woollen and silk manufactures of our own country; entering into solemn, mutual engagements, that the buyer shall have good, substantial, merchantable ware for his money, and at a certain rate, without the trouble of cheapening: so that if I sent a child for a piece of stuff of a particular colour and fineness, I should be sure not to be deceived; or, if I had reason to complain, the corporation should give me immediate satisfaction; and the name of the tradesman, who did me the wrong, should be published, and warning given not to deal with him for the future; unless the matter plainly appeared to be a mistake; for, beside the trouble of going from shop to shop, an ignorant customer runs the hazard of being cheated in the price and goodness of what he buys, being forced to an unequal combat with a dextrous and dishonest man in his own calling. Thus our goods fall under a general disreputation; and the gentry call for English cloth, or silk, from an opinion they have (and often too justly by our own faults) that the goodness more than makes up for the difference of price.

Besides, it has been the sottish and ruinous practice of us tradesmen, upon any great demand of goods, either at home or from abroad, to raise the prices immediately, and manufacture the said goods more slightly and fraudulently than before.

Of this foul and foolish proceeding, too many instances might be produced; and I cannot forbear mentioning one, whereby this poor kingdom has received such a fatal blow, in the only article of trade allowed us of any importance, that nothing but the success of Wood's project could outdo it. During the late plague in France, the Spaniards, who buy their linen cloths in that kingdom, not daring to venture thither for fear of infection, a very great demand was made here for that commodity,

and exported to Spain: but, whether by the ignorance of the merchants, or dishonesty of the northern weavers, or the collusion of both, the ware was so bad, and the price so excessive, that except some small quantity which was sold below the prime cost, the greatest part was returned: and I have been told by very intelligent persons, that if we had been fair dealers, the whole current of the linen trade to Spain, would have taken its course from hence.

If any punishments were to be inflicted on numbers of men, surely there could none be thought too great for such a race of traitors, and enemies to God and their country; who for the prospect of a little present gain, do not only ruin themselves (for that alone would be an example to the rest, and a blessing to the nation) but sell their souls to hell, and their country to destruction. And if the plague could have been confined only to those who were partakers in the guilt, had it travelled hither from Marseilles, those wretches would have died with less title to pity, than a highwayman going to the gallows.

But it happens very unluckily, that for some time past, all endeavours or proposals from private persons to advance the public service, however honestly and innocently designed, have been called FLYING IN THE KING'S FACE; and this to my knowledge has been the style of some persons, whose ancestors, (I mean those among them who had any) and themselves, have been flying in princes faces these four-score years: and from their own inclinations would do so still, if their interest did not lead them rather to fly in the face of a kingdom, which has given them wings to enable them for such a flight.

Thus, about four years ago, when a [illegible] was published endeavouring to persuade our people to wear

their own woollen manufactures, full of the most dutiful expressions to the king, and without the least party hint, it was termed "flying in the king's face;" the printer was prosecuted in the manner we all remember, and I hope it will somewhere be remembered farther, the jury kept eleven hours, and sent back nine times, till they were under the necessity of leaving the prisoner to the mercy of the court, by a special verdict; the judge on the bench invoking God for his witness, when he asserted "that the author's design was to bring in the pretender."

And thus also my own poor endeavours, to prevent the ruin of my country, by the admission of Wood's coin, were called by the same persons "flying in the king's face;" which I directly deny: for I cannot allow that vile representation of the royal countenance, in William Wood's adulterate copper, to be his sacred majesty's face; or, if it were, my flying was not against the impression, but the baseness of the metal; because I well remembered, that the image which Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be set up for all men to fall down and worship it, was not of COPPER, but pure GOLD. And I am heartily sorry we have so few royal images of that metal among us; the sight whereof, although it could hardly increase our veneration for his majesty, which is already so great, yet would very much enliven it with the mixture of comfort and satisfaction.

Alexander the Great would suffer no statuary except Phidias, to carve his image in stone or metal. How must he have treated such an operator as Wood, who goes about with sackfulls of dross, odiously misrepresenting his prince's countenance; and would force them by thousands upon every one of us at above six times the value!

Fourthly, that some effectual methods may be taken, to civilize the poorer sort of our natives, in all those parts of this kingdom where the Irish abound, by introducing among them our language and customs;* for want of which, they live in the utmost ignorance, barbarity, and poverty, giving themselves wholly up to idleness, nastiness, and thievery, to the very great and just reproach of too many landlords. And, if I had in me the least spirit of a projector, I would engage, that this might be effected in a few years at a very inconsiderable charge.

Fifthly, that due encouragement should be given to agriculture; and a stop put to that pernicious practice of graziers engrossing vast quantities of land, sometimes at great distance; whereby the country is extremely depopulated.

Sixthly, that the defects in those acts for planting forest trees, might be fully supplied, since they have hitherto been wholly ineffectual, except about the demesnes of a few gentlemen; and even there, in general, very unskilfully made, and thriving accordingly. Neither has there yet been due care taken to preserve what is planted, or to enclose grounds; not one hedge in a hundred coming to maturity, for want of skill and industry. The neglect of copsing woods cut down, has likewise been of very ill consequence. And if men were restrained from that unlimited liberty of cutting down their own woods, before the proper time, as they are in some other countries, it would be a mighty benefit to the kingdom.

* Since this hint was suggested, several useful seminaries have been instituted, under the name of "Charter Working Schools," in Ireland, supported by the royal benefaction of a thousand pounds a year, by a tax on hawkers and pedlers, and by voluntary subscriptions. These schools are for the education of boys and girls born of popish parents; in most of them, the children manufacture their own clothing, and the boys are employed in matters relative to husbandry. F.

For, I believe, there is not another example in Europe, of such a prodigious quantity of excellent timber cut down in so short a time, with so little advantage to the country, either in shipping or building.

I may add that absurd practice of cutting turf without any regularity; whereby great quantities of restorable land are made utterly desperate, many thousands of cattle destroyed, the turf more difficult to come at and carry home, and less fit for burning; the air made unwholesome by stagnating pools and marshes; and the very sight of such places offensive to those who ride by. Neither should that odious custom be allowed of cutting scraws (as they call them) which is flaying off the green surface of the ground, to cover their cabins, or make up their ditches; sometimes in shallow soils, where all is gravel within a few inches; and sometimes in low ground, within a thin greensward, and sloughy underneath; which last turns all into bog by this mismanagement. And I have heard from very skilful countrymen, that by these two practices in turf and scraws, the kingdom loses some hundreds of acres of profitable land every year; beside the irreparable loss of many skirts of bogs, which have a green coat of grass, and yet are mangled for turf; and beside the want of canals by regular cutting, which would not only be a great convenience for bringing their turf home at an easy rate, but likewise render even the larger bogs more dry and safe for summer pasture.

These, and some other speculations of the like kind, I had intended to publish in a particular discourse against this session of parliament: because, in some periods of my life, I had opportunity and curiosity to observe, from what causes those great errors in every branch of country management have arisen; of which I have now ventured to relate but few out of very many; whereof some perhaps would not be mentioned without giving offence,

which I have endeavoured by all possible means to avoid. And for the same reason, I chose to add here, the little I thought proper to say on this subject.

But, as to the lands of those who are perpetual absentees, I do not see any probability of their being ever improved. In former times their tenants sat at easy rents; but for some years past, they have been, generally speaking, more terribly racked by the dexterity of merciless agents from England, than even those who held under the severest landlords here. I was assured upon the place, by a great number of credible people, that a prodigious estate in the county of Cork being let upon leases for lives and great fines paid, the rent was so high, that the tenants begged leave to surrender their leases, and were content to lose their fines.

The cultivating and improving of land, is certainly a subject worthy of the highest inquiry in any country, but especially in ours; where we are so strangely limited in every branch of trade that can be of advantage to us, and utterly deprived of those, which are of the greatest importance; whereof I defy the most learned man in Europe, to produce me an example from any other kingdom in the world; for, we are denied the benefit which God and nature intended to us; as manifestly appears by our happy situation for commerce, and the great number of our excellent ports. So that I think little is left us, beside the cultivating of our own soil, encouraging agriculture, and making great plantations of trees, that we might not be under the necessity of sending for corn and bark from England, and timber from other countries. This would increase the number of our inhabitants, and help to consume our natural products, as well as manufactures at home. And I shall never forget what I once ventured to say to a great man in England, "that few politicians, with all their schemes,

are half so useful members of a commonwealth, as an honest farmer; who, by skilfully draining, fencing, manuring, and planting, has increased the intrinsic value of a piece of land; and thereby done a perpetual service to his country;" which it is a great controversy whether any of the former ever did since the creation of the world; but no controversy at all that ninety-nine in a hundred have done abundance of mischief.

A

FULL AND TRUE ACCOUNT

OF

THE SOLEMN PROCESSION

TO

THE GALLOWS,

AT THE EXECUTION OF WILLIAM WOOD, ESQUIRE, AND HARDWAREMAN, 1724.

Some time ago, upon a report spread that William Wood, hardwareman, was concealed in his brother-in-law's* house here in Dublin, a great number of people of different conditions, and of both sexes, crowded about the door, determinately bent to take revenge upon him as a coiner and a counterfeiter. Among the rest, a certain curious person standing in a corner observed, that they all discovered their resentments in the proper terms and expressions of their several trades and callings; whereof he wrote down as many as he could remember; and was pleased to communicate them to me, with leave to publish them, for the use of those who at any time hereafter may be at a loss for proper words,

* One Molyneux, an ironmonger. F.

wherein to express their good dispositions toward the said William Wood.

The people cried out to have him delivered into their hands.

Says the parliament man, *expel* him from the *house*.
2d parliament man. I second that *motion*.
Cook. I'll *baste* him.
2d Cook. I'll give him his *bellyful*.
3d Cook. I'll give him a *lick* in the *chops*.
4th Cook. I'll *souse* him.
Drunken man. I'll beat him as long as I can *stand*.
Bookseller. I'll turn over a *new leaf* with him.
Saddler. I'll *pummel* him.
Glazier. I'll make the *light* shine through him.
Grocer. I'll *pepper* him.
Groom. I'll *curry* him.
'Pothecary. I'll *pound* him.
2d 'Pothecary. I'll beat him to *mummy*.
Schoolmaster. I'll make him an *example*.
Rabbit catcher. I'll *ferret* him.
Paviour. I'll *thump* him.
Coiner. I'll give him a *rap*.
WHIG. *Down* with him.
TORY. *Up* with him.
Miller. I'll dash out his *grinders*.
2d Miller. *Dam* him.
Boatman. *Sink* him.
Scavenger. Throw him in the *kennel*.
Dyer. I'll beat him *black* and *blue*.
Bagnio man. I'll make the *house* too *hot* for him.
Whore. *Pox* rot him.
2d Whore. Let me *alone* with him.
3d Whore. *Clap* him up.

Mustard-maker. I'll take him by the *nose.*

Curate. I'll make the *devil come out of him.*

Popish priest. I'll *send him* to the devil.

Dancing master. I'll *teach him better manners.*

2d Dancing master. I'll make him cut *a caper* three story high.

Farmer. I'll *thrash* him.

Taylor. I'll sit on his *skirts.*

2d Taylor. *Hell* is too good for him.

3d Taylor. I'll *pink* his *doublet.*

4th Taylor. I'll make his a—— make *buttons.*

Basketmaker. I'll *hamper* him.

Fiddler. I'll have him by the *ears.*

2d Fiddler. I'll bang him to some *tune.*

Barber. I'll have him by the *beard.*

2d Barber. I'll pull his *whiskers.*

3d Barber. I'll make his *hair* stand an end.

4th Barber. I'll *comb* his *locks.*

Tinker. I'll try what *metal* he's made of.

Cobbler. I'll make *an end* of him.

Tobacconist. I'll make him set up his *pipes.*

2d Tobacconist. I'll make him *smoke.*

Goldfinder. I'll make him *stink.*

Hackney coachman. I'll make him know his *driver.*

2d Hackney coachman. I'll *drive* him to the devil.

Butcher. I'll have a *limb* of him.

2d Butcher. Let us *blow him up.*

3d Butcher. My *knife* in him.

Nurse. I'll *swaddle* him.

Anabaptist. We'll *dip* the rogue in the pond.

Ostler. I'll *rub* him *down.*

Shoemaker. Set him in the *stocks.*

Banker. I'll kick him to *half crowns.*

2d Banker. I'll *pay* him off.

Bowler. I'll have a *rubber* with him.
Gamester. I'll make his *bones rattle.*
Boddicemaker. I'll *lace* his sides.
Gardener. I'll make him *water his plants.*
Alewife. I'll *reckon* with him.
Cuckold. I'll make him pull in his *horns.*
Old Woman. I'll *mumble* him.
Hangman. I'll *throttle* him.

But at last the people having received assurances that William Wood was neither in the house nor kingdom, appointed certain commissioners to hang him in effigy; whereof the whole ceremony and procession deserve to be transmitted to posterity.

First, the way was cleared by a detachment of the *black-guards*, with short sticks in their hands, and cockades of paper in their hats.

Then appeared William Wood, Esq. represented to the life by an old piece of carved timber, taken from the keel of a ship. Upon his face, which looked very dismal, were fixed at proper distances several pieces of his own coin, to denote who he was, and to signify his calling and his crime. He wore on his head a peruke, very artfully composed of four old mops; a halter about his neck served him for a cravat. His clothes were indeed not so neat and elegant as is usual with persons in his condition (which some censorious people imputed to affectation) for he was covered with a large rug of several colours in patchwork: he was borne upon the shoulders of an able-bodied porter. In his march by St. Stephen's green, he often bowed on both sides, to show his respects to the company: his deportment was grave; and his countenance, though somewhat pensive was very composed.

Behind him followed his father alone, in a long mourning cloak, with his hat over his nose, and a handkerchief in his hand to wipe tears from his face.

Next in order marched the executioner himself in person; whose venerable aspect drew the eyes of the whole assembly upon him; but he was farther distinguished by a halter, which he bore upon his left shoulder as the badge of his office.

Then followed two persons hand in hand; the one representing William Wood's brother-in-law: the other a certain saddler, his intimate friend, whose name I forgot. Each had a small kettle in his hand, wherein was a reasonable quantity of the new halfpence. At proper periods they shook their kettles, which made a melancholy sound like the ringing of a knell for their partner and confederate.

After these followed several officers, whose assistance was necessary for the more decent performance of the great work in hand.

The procession was closed with an innumerable crowd of people, who frequently sent out loud huzzas; which were censured by wiser heads as a mark of inhumanity, and an ungenerous triumph over the unfortunate, without duly considering the various vicissitudes of human life. However, as it becomes an impartial historian, I will not conceal one observation, that Mr. Wood himself appeared wholly unmoved, without the least alteration in his countenance; only when he came within sight of the fatal tree, which happened to be of the same species of timber with his own person, he seemed to be somewhat pensive.

At the place of execution he appeared undaunted, nor was seen to shed a tear. He made no resistance, but submitted himself with great resignation to the hangman,

who was indeed thought to use him with too much roughness, neither kissing him, nor asking him pardon. His dying SPEECH was printed, and deserves to be written in letters of GOLD. Being asked whether it were his own true genuine SPEECH, he did not deny it.

Those of the softer sex, who attended the ceremony, lamented that so comely and well *timbered* a man should come to so untimely an end. He hung but a short time; for, upon feeling his breast, they found it cold and stiff.

It is strange to think, how this melancholy spectacle turned the hearts of the people to compassion. When he was cut down, the body was carried through the whole city to gather contributions for his wake; and all sorts of people showed their liberality according as they were able. The ceremony was performed in an alehouse of distinction, and in a manner suitable to the quality of the deceased. While the attendants were discoursing about his funeral, a worthy member of the assembly stood up, and proposed that the body should be carried out the next day, and burned with the same pomp and formalities used at his execution; which would prevent the malice of his enemies, and all indignities that might be done to his remains. This was agreed to; and about nine o'clock on the following morning there appeared a second procession. But, burning not having been any part of the sentence, authority thought fit to interpose, and the corpse was rescued by the civil power.

We hear the body is not yet interred; which occasions many speculations. But what is more wonderful, it is positively affirmed by many who pretend to have been eye-witnesses, that there does not appear to be the

least alteration in any one lineament or feature of his countenance; nor visible decay in his whole frame, farther than what had been made by worms long before his execution. The solution of which difficulty I shall leave among naturalists.

OBSERVATIONS

OCCASIONED BY READING A PAPER, ENTITLED, "THE CASE OF THE WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES OF DUBLIN," &c.

THE paper called "The Case of the Woollen Manufactures," &c. is very well drawn up. The reasonings of the author are just, the facts true, and the consequences natural. But his censure of those seven vile citizens, who import such a quantity of silk stuffs, and woollen cloth from England, is a hundred times gentler than enemies to their country deserve; because I think no punishment in this world can be great enough for them, without immediate repentance and amendment. But after all, the writer of that paper has very lightly touched one point of the greatest importance, and very poorly answered the main objection, that the clothiers are defective both in the quality and quantity of their goods.

For my own part, when I consider the several societies of handicraftsmen in all kinds, as well as shopkeepers, in this city, after eighteen years experience of their dealings, I am at a loss to know in which of these societies the most or least honesty is to be found. For instance, when any trade comes first into my head, upon examination I determine it exceeds all other fraud. But after I have considered them all round, as far as my knowledge or experience reaches, I am at a loss to de-

termine, and to save trouble I put them all upon a par. This I chiefly apply to those societies of men who get their livelihood by the labour of their hands. For, as to shopkeepers, I cannot deny that I have found some few honest men among them, taking the word honest in the largest and most charitable sense. But as to handicraftsmen, although I shall endeavour to believe it possible to find a fair dealer among their clans, yet I confess it has never been once my good fortune to employ one single workman, who did not cheat me at all times to the utmost of his power in the materials, the work, and the price. One universal maxim I have constantly observed among them, that they would rather get a shilling by cheating you, than twenty in the honest way of dealing, although they were sure to lose your custom, as well as that of others, whom you might probably recommend to them.

This, I must own, is the natural consequence of poverty and oppression. These wretched people catch at any thing to save them a minute longer from drowning. Thus Ireland is the poorest of all civilized countries in Europe, with every natural advantage to make it one of the richest.

As to the grand objection, which this writer slubbers over in so careless a manner, because indeed it was impossible to find a satisfactory answer, I mean the knavery of our woollen manufacturers in general, I shall relate some facts, which I had more opportunities to observe than usually fall in the way of men who are not of the trade. For some years, the master and wardens, with many of their principal workmen and shopkeepers, came often to the Deanery to relate their grievances, and to desire my advice as well as my assistance. What reasons might move them to this proceeding, I leave to public conjecture. The truth is, that the woollen

nufacture of this kingdom sat always nearest my heart. But the greatest difficulty lay in these perpetual differences between the shopkeepers and the workmen they employed. Ten or a dozen of these latter often came to the Deanery with their complaints, which I often repeated to the shopkeepers. As, that they brought their prices too low for a poor weaver to get his bread by; and instead of ready money for their labour on Saturdays, they gave them only such a quantity of cloth or stuff, at the highest rate, which the poor men were often forced to sell one third below the rate, to supply their urgent necessities. On the other side, the shopkeepers complained of idleness, and want of skill, or care, or honesty, in their workmen; and probably their accusations on both sides were just.

Whenever the weavers, in a body, came to me for advice, I gave it freely, that they should contrive some way to bring their goods into reputation; and give up that abominable principle of endeavouring to thrive by imposing bad ware at high prices to their customers, whereby no shopkeeper can reasonably expect to thrive. For, beside the dread of God's anger (which is a motive of small force among them) they may be sure that no buyer of common sense will return to the same shop where he was once or twice defrauded. That gentlemen and ladies, when they found nothing but deceit in the sale of Irish cloths and stuffs, would act as they ought to do, both in prudence and resentment, in going to those very bad citizens the writer mentions, and purchase English goods.

I went farther, and proposed that ten or a dozen of the most substantial woollen drapers should join in publishing an advertisement, signed with their names, to the following purpose: That for the better encouragement of all gentlemen, &c. the persons under named did bind

themselves mutually to sell their several cloths and stuffs (naming each kind) at the lowest rate, right merchantable goods, of such a breadth, which they would warrant to be good according to the several prices: and that if a child of ten years old were sent with money, and directions what cloth or stuff to buy, he should not be wronged in any one article. And that whoever should think himself ill used in any of the said shops, he should have his money again from the seller, or upon his refusal, from the rest of the said subscribers, who, if they found the buyer discontented with the cloth or stuff, should be obliged to refund the money; and if the seller refused to repay them, and take his goods again, should publicly advertise that they would answer for none of his goods any more. This would be to establish credit, upon which all trade depends.

I proposed this scheme several times to the corporation of weavers, as well as to the manufacturers, when they came to apply for my advice at the Deanery House. I likewise went to the shops of several woollen drapers upon the same errand, but always in vain; for they perpetually gave me the deaf ear, and avoided entering into discourse upon that proposal: I suppose, because they thought it was in vain, and that the spirit of fraud had gotten too deep and universal a possession to be driven out by any arguments from interest, reason, or conscience.

A LETTER

TO THE

ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN,*

CONCERNING THE WEAVERS.

MY LORD,

THE corporation of weavers in the woollen manufacture, who have so often attended your grace, and called upon me with their schemes and proposals, were with me on Thursday last; when he who spoke for the rest, and in the name of his absent brethren, said, "It was the opinion of the whole body, that if somewhat was written at this time, by an able hand, to persuade the people of this kingdom to wear their own woollen manufactures, it might be of good use to the nation in general, and preserve many hundreds of their trade from starving." To which I answered, "That it was hard for any man of common spirit, to turn his thoughts to such speculations, without discovering a resentment, which people are too delicate to bear." For I will not deny to your grace, that I cannot reflect on the singular condition of this country, different from all others upon the face of the earth, without some emotion; and without often examining, as I pass the streets, whether those animals which come in my way, with two legs and human

* Dr. William King. F.

faces, clad and erect, be of the same species, with what I have seen very like them in England as to the outward shape, but differing in their notions, natures, and intellectuals, more than any two kinds of brutes in the forest; which any man of common prudence would immediately discover, by persuading them to define what they meant by law, liberty, property, courage, reason, loyalty, or religion.

One thing, my lord, I am very confident of, that if God Almighty, for our sins, would most justly send us a pestilence, whoever should dare to discover his grief in public for such a visitation, would certainly be censured for disaffection to the government: for I solemnly profess, that I do not know one calamity we have undergone these many years, which any man, whose opinions were not in fashion, dared to lament, without being openly charged with that imputation. And this is the harder, because although a mother, when she has corrected her child, may sometimes force it to kiss the rod, yet she will never give that power to the footboy or the scullion.

My lord, there are two things for the people of this kingdom to consider: first, their present evil condition; and secondly, what can be done in some degree to remedy it.

I shall not enter into a particular description of our present misery; it has been already done in several papers, and very fully in one entitled, "A short View of the State of Ireland." It will be enough to mention the entire want of trade, the navigation act executed with the utmost rigour, the remission of a million every year to England, the ruinous importation of foreign luxury and vanity, the oppression of landlords, and discouragement of agriculture.

Now all these evils are without the possibility of a cure, except that of importations; and to fence against

ruinous folly, will be always in our power, in spite of the discouragements, mortifications, contempt, hatred, and opposition, we labour under: but our trade will never mend, the navigation act never be softened, our absentees never return, our endless foreign payments never be lessened, our own landlords never be less exacting.

All other schemes for preserving this kingdom from utter ruin, are idle and visionary; consequently drawn from wrong reasoning, and from general topics, which, for the same causes that they may be true in all nations, are certainly false in ours; as I have told the public often enough, but with as little effect, as what I shall say at present is likely to produce.

I am weary of so many abortive projects for the advancement of trade; of so many crude proposals, in letters sent me from unknown hands; of so many contradictory speculations, about raising or sinking the value of gold and silver: I am not in the least sorry to hear of the great numbers going to America, although very much for the causes that drive them from us, since the uncontrolled maxim, "That people are the riches of a nation," is no maxim here under our circumstances. We have neither manufactures to employ them about, nor food to support them.

If a private gentleman's income be sunk irretrievably for ever, from a hundred pounds to fifty, and he has no other method to supply the deficiency; I desire to know, my lord, whether such a person has any other course to take, than to sink half his expenses in every article of economy, to save himself from ruin and a gaol. Is not this more than doubly the case of Ireland, where the want of money, the irretrievable ruin of trade, with the other evils above mentioned, and many more too well known and felt, and too numerous or invidious to be related, have been gradually sinking us, for above a dozen

years past, to a degree, that we are at least by two thirds, in a worse condition, than was ever known since the revolution? Therefore, instead of dreams and projects for the advancing of trade, we have nothing left but to find out some expedient, whereby we may reduce our expenses to our incomes.

Yet this procedure, allowed so necessary in all private families, and in its own nature so easy to be put in practice, may meet with strong opposition, by the cowardly slavish indulgence of the men, to the intolerable pride, arrogance, vanity, and luxury of the women; who, strictly adhering to the rules of modern education, seem to employ their whole stock of invention in contriving new arts of profusion, faster than the most parsimonious husband can afford: and, to compass this work the more effectually, their universal maxim is, to despise and detest every thing of the growth of their own country, and most to value whatever comes from the very remotest parts of the globe. And I am convinced, that if the virtuosi could once find out a world in the moon, with a passage to it, our women would wear nothing but what directly came from thence.

The prime cost of wine yearly imported to Ireland, is valued at thirty thousand pounds; and the tea (including coffee and chocolate) at five times that sum. The lace, silks, calicoes, and all other unnecessary ornaments for women, including English cloths and stuffs, added to the former articles, make up (to compute grossly) about four hundred thousand pounds.

Now if we should allow the thirty thousand pounds wherein the women have their share, and which is all we have to comfort us, and deduct seventy thousand pounds more for overreaching, there would still remain three hundred thousand pounds annually spent, for unwholesome drugs and unnecessary finery: which prodigious

sum would be wholly saved, and many thousands of our miserable shopkeepers and manunfacturers comfortably supported.

Let speculative people busy their brains as much as they please, there is no other way to prevent this kingdom from sinking for ever, than by utterly renouncing all foreign dress and luxury.

It is absolutely so in fact, that every husband of any fortune in the kingdom, is nourishing a poisonous devouring serpent in his bosom, with all the mischief, but with none of its wisdom.

If all the women were clad with the growth of their own country, they might still vie with each other in the course of foppery; and still have room left to vie with each other, and equally show their wit and judgment, in deciding upon the variety of Irish stuffs. And if they could be contented with their native wholesome slops for breakfast, we should hear no more of the spleen, hysterics, colics, palpitations, and asthmas. They might still be allowed to ruin each other and their husbands at play, because the money lost would circulate among ourselves.

My lord, I freely own it a wild imagination, that any words will cure the sottishness of men, or the vanity of women: but the kingdom is in a fair way of producing the most effectual remedy, when there will not be money left for the common course of buying and selling the very necessaries of life in our markets, unless we absolutely change the whole method of our proceedings.

The corporation of weavers in woollen and silk, who have so frequently offered proposals both to your grace and to me, are the hottest and coldest generation of men that I have known. About a month ago, they attended your grace, when I had the honour to be with you; and designed me the same favour. They desired you would

recommend to your clergy to wear gowns of Irish stuffs, which might probably spread the example among all their brethren in the kingdom; and perhaps, among the lawyers and gentlemen of the university, and among the citizens of those corporations who appear in gowns on solemn occasions. I then mentioned a kind of stuff, not above eight pence a yard, which I heard had been contrived by some of the trade, and was very convenient. I desired they would prepare some of that, or any sort of black stuff, on a certain day, when your grace would appoint as many clergymen as could readily be found to meet at your palace, and there give their opinions; and that your grace's visitation approaching, you could then have the best opportunity of seeing what could be done in a matter of such consequence, as they seemed to think, to the woollen manufacture. But, instead of attending, as was expected, they came to me a fortnight after with a new proposal, that something should be written by an acceptable and able hand, to promote in general the wearing of home manufactures; and their civilities would fix that work upon me. I asked if they had prepared the stuffs, as they had promised, and your grace expected; but they had not made the least step in the matter, nor, as it appears, thought of it more.

I did, some years ago, propose to the masters and principal dealers in the home manufactures of silk and wool, that they should meet together; and after mature consideration, publish advertisements to the following purpose:

That in order to encourage the wearing of Irish manufactures in silk and woollen, they gave notice to the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, That they, the undersigned, would enter into bonds, for themselves and for each other, to sell the several sorts of stuffs, cloths, and silks, made to the best perfection they were able, for cer-

tain fixed prices; and in such a manner, that if a child were sent to any of their shops, the buyer might be secure of he value, and goodness, and measure of the ware; and, lest this might be thought to look like a monopoly, any other member of the trade might be admitted, upon such conditions as should be agreed on. And if any person whatsoever should complain that he was ill used, in the value and goodness of what he bought, the matter should be examined, the person injured be fully satisfied by the whole corporation without delay, and the dishonest seller be struck out of the society, unless it appeared evidently that the failure proceeded only from mistake.

The mortal danger is, that if these dealers could prevail, by the goodness and cheapness of their cloths and stuffs, to give a turn to the principal people of Ireland in favour of their goods; they would relapse into the knavish practice, peculiar to this kingdom, which is apt to run through all trades, even so low as a common ale-seller: who, as soon as he gets a vogue for his liquor, and outsells his neighbours, thinks his credit will put off the worst he can buy, till his customers will come no more. Thus I have known at London, in a general mourning, the drapers dye black all their damaged goods, and sell them at double rates; then complain, and petition the court, that they are ready to starve by the continuance of the mourning.

Therefore, I say, those principal weavers who would enter into such a compact as I have mentioned, must give sufficient security against all such practices: for, if once the women can persuade their husbands that foreign goods, beside the finery, will be as cheap, and do more service, our last state will be worse than the first.

I do not here pretend to digest perfectly the method by which these principal shopkeepers shall proceed, in such a proposal: but my meaning is clear enough, and cannot reasonably be objected against.

We have seen what a destructive loss the kingdom received, by the detestable fraud of the merchants, or northern linen weavers, or both; notwithstanding all the care of the governors of that board, when we had an offer of commerce with the Spaniards for our linen, to the value, as I am told, of thirty thousand pounds a year. But, while we deal like pedlers, we shall practice like pedlers, and sacrifice all honesty to the present urging advantage.

What I have said may serve as an answer to the desire made me by the corporation of weavers, that I would offer my notions to the public. As to any thing farther, let them apply themselves to the parliament in their next session. Let them prevail on the house of commons to grant one very reasonable request; and I shall think there is still some spirit left in the nation, when I read a vote to this purpose: "Resolved, *nemine contradicente*, That this house will, for the future, wear no cloths but such as are made of Irish growth or of Irish manufacture, nor will permit their wives or children to wear any other; and that they will, to the utmost, endeavour to prevail with their friends, relations, dependants, and tenants, to follow their example." And if, at the same time, they could banish tea and coffee, and chinaware, out of their families, and force their wives to chat their scandal over an infusion of sage, or other wholesome domestic vegetables, we might possibly be able to subsist, and pay our absentees, pensioners, generals, civil officers, appeals, colliers, temporary travellers, students, schoolboys, splenetic visitors of Bath, Tunbridge, and Epsom, with all other smaller drains, by sending our crude un-

wrought goods to England, and receiving from thence, and all other countries, nothing but what is fully manufactured, and keep a few potatoes and oatmeal for our own subsistence.

I have been for a dozen years past wisely prognosticating the present condition of this kingdom; which any human creature of common sense could foretel, with as little sagacity as myself. My meaning is, that a consumptive body must needs die, which has spent all its spirits, and received no nourishment. Yet I am often tempted to pity, when I hear the poor farmer and cottager lamenting the hardness of the times, and imputing them either to one or two ill seasons, which better climates than ours are more exposed to; or to scarcity of silver, which, to a nation of liberty, would only be a slight and temporary inconvenience, to be removed at a month's warning.

ON GIVING BADGES TO THE POOR.

Deanery-House, Sept. 26, 1726.

The continual concourse of beggars, from all parts of the kingdom to this city, having made it impossible for the several parishes to maintain their own poor, according to the ancient laws of the land; several lord mayors did apply themselves to the lord archbishop of Dublin, that his grace would direct his clergy, and the churchwardens of the said city, to appoint badges of brass, copper, or pewter, to be worn by the poor of the several parishes. The badges to be marked with initial letters of the name of each church, and numbered 1, 2, 3, &c. and to be well sewed and fastened on the right and left shoulder of the outward garment of each of the said poor, by which they might be distinguished. And that none of the said poor should go out of their own parish to beg alms; whereof the beadles were to take care.

His grace the lord archbishop did accordingly give his directions to the clergy; which, however, have proved wholly ineffectual, by the fraud, perverseness, or pride, of the said poor; several of them openly protesting, "they will never submit to wear the said badges." And of those who received them, almost every one keep them in their pockets, or hang them in a string about their necks, or fasten them under their coats, not to be seen; by which means the whole design is eluded; so that a man may walk from one end of the town to the other, without seeing one beggar regularly badged,

and in such great numbers, that they are a mighty nuisance to the public, most of them being foreigners.

It is therefore proposed, that his grace the lord archbishop would please to call the clergy of the city together, and renew his directions and exhortations to them, to put the affair of badges effectually in practice, by such methods as his grace and they shall agree upon. And, I think, it would be highly necessary, that some paper should be pasted up, in several proper parts of the city, signifying this order, and exhorting all people to give no alms except to those poor who are regularly badged, and only while they are in the precincts of their own parishes. And if something like this were delivered by the ministers, in the reading-desk, two or three Lord's days successively, it would still be of farther use to put this matter upon a right foot. And that all who offend against this regulation be treated as vagabonds and sturdy beggars.

CONSIDERATIONS

ABOUT

MAINTAINING THE POOR.

We have been amused, for at least thirty years past, with numberless schemes, in writing and discourse, both in and out of parliament, for maintaining the poor, and setting them to work, especially in this city; most of which were idle, indigested; or visionary; and all of them ineffectual, as it has plainly appeared by the consequences. Many of those projectors were so stupid, that they drew a parallel from Holland to England, to be settled in Ireland; that is to say, from two countries with full freedom and encouragement for trade, to a third where all kind of trade is cramped, and the most beneficial parts are entirely taken away. But the perpetual infelicity of false and foolish reasoning, as well as proceeding and acting upon it, seems to be fatal to this country.

For my own part, who have much conversed with those folks who call themselves merchants, I do not remember to have met with a more ignorant and wrong thinking race of people in the very first rudiments of trade; which, however, was not so much owing to their want of capacity, as to the crazy constitution of this kingdom; where pedlers are better qualified to thrive, than the wisest merchants. I could fill a volume with only setting down a list of the public absurdities, by which

this kingdom has suffered within the compass of my own memory, such as could not be believed of any nation, among whom folly was not established as a law. I cannot forbear instancing a few of these, because it may be of some use to those who shall have it in their power to be more cautious for the future.

The first was, the building of the barracks, whereof I have seen above one half, and have heard enough of the rest, to affirm that the public has been cheated of at least two thirds of the money, raised for that use, by the plain fraud of the undertakers.

Another was the management of the money raised for the Palatines; when, instead of employing that great sum in purchasing lands in some remote and cheap part of the kingdom, and there planting those people as a colony, the whole end was utterly defeated.

A third is, the insurance office against fire, by which several thousand pounds are yearly remitted to England (a trifle, it seems, we can easily spare) and will gradually increase until it comes to a good national tax: for the society marks upon our houses (under which might properly be written, "The Lord have mercy upon us") spread faster and farther than the colony of frogs.* I

* This similitude, which is certainly the finest that could possibly have been used upon this occasion, seems to require a short explication. About the beginning of this current century, Dr. Gwythers, a physician, and fellow of the university of Dublin, brought over with him a parcel of frogs from England to Ireland, in order to propagate the species in that kingdom, and threw them into the ditches of the University park; but they all perished. Whereupon he sent to England for some bottles of the frog-spawn, which he threw into those ditches, by which means the species of frogs was propagated in that kingdom. However, their number was so small in the year 1720, that a frog was no where to be seen in Ireland, except in the neighbourhood of the University park; but within six or seven years after they spread thirty, forty, or fifty miles over the country; and so at last, by degrees, over the whole nation. D. S.

have for above twenty years past, given warning several thousand times, to many substantial people, and to such who are acquainted with lords and squires, and the like great folks, to any of whom I have not the honour to be known: I mentioned my daily fears, lest our watchful friends in England might take this business out of our hands: and how easy it would be to prevent that evil, by erecting a society of persons who had good estates, such, for instance, as that noble knot of bankers under the style of "Swift and Company." But now we are become tributary to England, not only for materials to light our own fires, but for engines to put them out; to which, if hearth-money be added (repealed in England as a grievance) we have the honour to pay three taxes for fire.

A fourth was the knavery of those merchants, or linen manufacturers, or both; when, upon occasion of the plague at Marseilles, we had a fair opportunity of getting into our hands the whole linen-trade with Spain; but the commodity was so bad, and held at so high a rate, that almost the whole cargo was returned, and the small remainder sold below the prime cost.

So many other particulars of the same nature crowd into my thoughts, that I am forced to stop; and the rather because they are not very proper for my subject, to which I shall now return.

Among all the schemes for maintaining the poor of the city, and setting them to work, the least weight has been laid upon that single point which is of the greatest importance; I mean, that of keeping foreign beggars from swarming hither, out of every part of the country; for, until this be brought to pass effectually, all our wise reasonings and proceedings upon them will be vain and ridiculous.

The prodigious number of beggars throughout this kingdom, in proportion to so small a number of people, is owing to many reasons: to the laziness of the natives; the want of work to employ them; the enormous rents paid by cottagers for their miserable cabins and potatoe-plots; their early marriages without the least prospect of establishment; the ruin of agriculture, whereby such vast numbers are hindered from providing their own bread, and have no money to purchase it; the mortal damp upon all kinds of trade, and many other circumstances too tedious or invidious to mention.

And to the same causes we owe the perpetual concourse of foreign beggars to this town; the country landlords giving all assistance, except money and victuals, to drive from their estates those miserable creatures they have undone.

It was a general complaint against the poor-house, under its former governors, "That the number of poor in this city did not lessen by taking three hundred into the house, and all of them recommended under the minister and churchwardens' hands of the several parishes;" and this complaint must still continue, although the poor-house should be enlarged to maintain three thousand, or even double that number.

The revenues of the poor-house, as it is now established, amount to about two thousand pounds a year; whereof, two hundred allowed for officers, and one hundred for repairs, the remaining seventeen hundred, at four pounds a head, will support four hundred and twenty-five persons. This is a favourable allowance, considering that I subtract nothing for the diet of those officers, and for wear and tear of furniture; and if every one of these collegiates should be set to work, it is agreed they will not be able to gain by their labour above one fourth part of their maintenance.

At the same time the oratorial part of these gentlemen, seldom vouchsafe to mention fewer than fifteen hundred, or two thousand people, to be maintained in this hospital, without troubling their heads about the fund. * * * * * * * *

A LETTER

TO THE

WRITER OF THE OCCASIONAL PAPER. 1727.*

SIR,

ALTHOUGH, in one of your papers, you declare an intention of turning them, during the dead season of the year, into accounts of domestic and foreign intelligence; yet, I think we, your correspondents, should not understand your meaning so literally, as if you intended to reject inserting any other paper, which might probably be useful for the public. Neither indeed am I fully convinced, that this new course you resolve to take, will render you more secure than your former laudable practice, of inserting such speculations, as were sent you by several well-wishers to the good of the kingdom; however grating such notices might be to some, who wanted neither power nor inclination to resent them at your cost; for, since there is a direct law against spreading false news, if you should venture to tell us in one of the Craftsmen that the Dey of Algiers had got the toothache, or the King of Bantam had taken a purge; and the facts should be contradicted in succeeding packets; I do not see what plea you could offer, to avoid the ut-

* His letters are printed in Lord Bolingbroke's Works. By a letter in this collection, dated May 18, 1727, it appears that his lordship had seen the copy of Swift's letter, before it was sent to the press. N.

most penalty of the law, because you are not supposed to be very gracious among those who are most able to hurt you.

Besides, as I take your intentions to be sincerely mean for the public service; so your original method of entertaining and instructing us, will be more general, and more useful in this season of the year, when people are retired to amusements more cool, more innocent, and much more reasonable, than those they have left; when their passions are subsided or suspended; when they have no occasions of inflaming themselves, or each other: where they will have opportunity of hearing common sense, every day in the week, from their tenants or neighbouring farmers; and thereby be qualified, in hours of rain or leisure, to read and consider the advice or information you shall send them.

Another weighty reason why you should not alter your manner of writing, by dwindling to a newsmonger, is, because there is no suspension of arms agreed on between you and your adversaries; who fight with a sort of weapons which have two wonderful qualities, that they are never to be worn out, and are best wielded by the weakest hands, and which the poverty of our language forces me to call, by the trite appellations of scurrility, slander, and Billingsgate. I am far from thinking that these gentlemen, or rather their employers, (for the operators themselves are too obscure to be guessed at) should be answered after their own way, although it were possible to drag them out of their obscurity: but I wish you would inquire what real use such a conduct is to the cause they have been so largely paid to defend. The author of the three first Occasional Letters, a person altogether unknown, has been thought to glance (for what reason he best knows) at some public proceedings, as if they were not agreeable to his private opinions.

In answer to this, the pamphleteers retained on the other side, are instructed by their superiors, to single out an adversary, whose abilities they have most reason to apprehend; and to load himself, his family, and friends, with all the infamy, that a perpetual conversation in Bridewell, Newgate, and the stews, could furnish them; but, at the same time, so very unluckily, that the most distinguishing parts of their characters strike directly in the face of their benefactors; whose idea, presenting itself along with his guineas perpetually to their imagination, occasioned this desperate blunder.

But, allowing this heap of slander to be truth, and applied to the proper person; what is to be the consequence? Are our public debts to be the sooner paid; the corruptions that author complains of, to be the sooner cured; an honourable peace, or a glorious war, the more likely to ensue; trade to flourish; the Ostend company to be demolished; Gibraltar and Port Mahon left entire in our possession; the balance of Europe to be preserved; the malignity of parties to be forever at an end; none but persons of merit, virtue, genius, and learning, to be encouraged? I ask whether any of these effects will follow, upon the publication of this author's libel, even supposing he could prove every syllable of it to be true?

At the same time, I am well assured, that the only reason of ascribing those papers to a particular person, is built upon the information of a certain pragmatical spy of quality, well known to act in that capacity, by those, into whose company he insinuates himself; a sort of persons, who, although without much love, esteem, or dread of people in present power, yet have too much common prudence, to speak their thoughts with freedom, before such an intruder; who, therefore, im-

poses grossly upon his masters, if he makes them pay for any thing but his own conjectures.

It is a grievous mistake in a great minister to neglect or despise, much more to irritate men of genius and learning. I have heard one of the wisest persons in my time observe, that an administration was to be known and judged, by the talents of those who appeared their advocates in print. This I must never allow to be a general rule; yet I cannot but think it prodigiously unfortunate, that among the answerers, defenders, repliers, and panegyrists, started up in defence of present persons and proceedings, there has not yet arisen one, whose labours we can read with patience, however we may applaud their loyalty and good will: and all this, with the advantages of constant ready pay, of natural and acquired venom, and a grant of the whole fund of slander, to range over and riot in as they please.

On the other side, a turbulent writer of Occasional Letters, and other vexatious papers, in conjunction perhaps with one or two friends as bad as himself, is able to disconcert, tease, and sour us, whenever he thinks fit, merely by the strength of genius and truth; and after so dexterous a manner, that when we are vexed to the soul, and well know the reasons why we are so, we are ashamed to own the first, and cannot tell how to express the other. In a word, it seems to me that all the writers are on one side, and all the railers on the other.

However, I do not pretend to assert that it is impossible for an ill minister to find men of wit, who may be drawn, by a very valuable consideration, to undertake his defence: but the misfortune is, that the heads of such writers rebel against their hearts; their genius forsakes them, when they would offer to prostitute it to the service of injustice, corruption, party rage, and false representations of things and persons.

And this is the best argument I can offer in defence of great men, who have been of late so very unhappy in the choice of their paper-champions: although I cannot much commend their good husbandry, in those exorbitant payments, of twenty, and sixty guineas at a time, for a scurvy pamphlet; since the sort of work they require, is what will all come within the talents of any one, who has enjoyed the happiness of a very bad education, has kept the vilest company, is endowed with a servile spirit, is master of an empty purse, and a heart full of malice.

But, to speak the truth in soberness; it should seem a little hard, since the old whiggish principle has been recalled, of standing up for the liberty of the press, to a degree that no man, for several years past, durst venture out a thought, which did not square to a point, with the maxims and practices that then prevailed: I say, it is a little hard, that the vilest mercenaries should be countenanced, preferred, rewarded, for discharging their brutalities against men of honour, only upon a bare conjecture.

If it should happen that these profligates have attacked an innocent person, I ask, what satisfaction can their hirers give in return? Not all the wealth raked together by the most corrupt rapacious ministers, in the longest course of unlimited power, would be sufficient to atone for the hundredth part of such an injury.

In the common way of thinking, it is a situation sufficient in all conscience to satisfy a reasonable ambition, for a private person to command the laws, the forces, the revenues of a great kingdom; to reward and advance his followers and flatterers as he pleases, and to keep his enemies (real or imaginary) in the dust. In such an exaltation, why should he be at the trouble to make use of fools to sound his praises, (because I always thought the lion was hard set, when he chose the ass for his trum-

peter) or knaves to revenge his quarrel, at the expense of innocent men's reputations?

With all those advantages, I cannot see why persons in the height of power, should be under the least concern on account of their reputation, for which they have no manner of use; or to ruin that of others, which may perhaps be the only possession their enemies have left them. Supposing times of corruption, which I am very far from doing; if a writer displays them in their proper colours, does he do any thing worse than sending customers to the shop? "Here only, at the sign of the Brazen Head, are to be sold places and pensions: beware of counterfeits, and take care of mistaking the door."

For my own part, I think it very unnecessary to give the character of a great minister in the fulness of his power, because it is a thing that naturally does itself, and is obvious to the eyes of all mankind: for his personal qualities are all derived into the most minute parts of his administration. If this be just, prudent, regular, impartial, intent upon the public good, prepared for present exigencies, and provident of the future; such is the director himself in his private capacity; if it be rapacious, insolent, partial, palliating long and deep diseases of the public, with empirical remedies, false, disguised, impudent, malicious, revengeful; you shall infallibly find the private life of the conductor, to answer in every point: nay, what is more, every twinge of the gout or gravel, will be felt in their consequences by the community: as the thief-catcher, upon viewing a house broke open, could immediately distinguish, from the manner of the workmanship, by what hand it was done.

It is hard to form a maxim against which an exception is not ready to start up; so, in the present case, where the minister grows enormously rich, the public is

proportionably poor, as in a private family, the steward always thrives the fastest, when his lord is running out.

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A SHORT VIEW

OF

THE STATE OF IRELAND. 1727.

I AM assured, that it has for some time been practised as a method of making men's court, when they are asked about the rate of lands, the abilities of tenants, the state of trade and manufacture in this kingdom, and how their rents are paid; to answer, that in their neighbourhood all things are in a flourishing condition, the rent and purchase of land every day increasing. And if a gentleman happen to be a little more sincere in his representation; beside being looked on as not well affected, he is sure to have a dozen contradictors at his elbow. I think it is no manner of secret, why these questions are so cordially asked, or so obligingly answered.

But since, with regard to the affairs of this kingdom, I have been using all endeavours to subdue my indignation; to which indeed I am not provoked by any personal interest, not being the owner of one spot of ground in the whole island; I shall only enumerate by rules generally known, and never contradicted, what are the true causes of any country's flourishing and growing rich; and then examine what effects arise from those causes in the kingdom of Ireland.

The first cause of a kingdom's thriving is, the fruitfulness of the soil to produce the necessaries and conve-

ampled circumstances, as grievous as they are invidious to mention. To go on to the rest:

It is too well known, that we are forced to obey some laws we never consented to; which is a condition I must not call by its true uncontroverted name, for fear of Lord Chief Justice Whitshed's ghost with his *Libertas et natale solum*, written for a motto on his coach, as it stood at the door of the court, while he was perjuring himself to betray both. Thus we are in the condition of patients, who have physic sent them by doctors at a distance, strangers to their constitution and the nature of their disease: and thus we are forced to pay five hundred per cent. to decide our properties: in all which we have likewise the honour to be distinguished from the whole race of mankind.

As to the improvement of land; those few, who attempt that or planting, through covetousness, or want of skill, generally leave things worse than they were; neither succeeding in trees nor hedges; and by running into the fancy of grazing, after the manner of the Scythians, are every day depopulating the country.

We are so far from having a king to reside among us, that even the viceroy is generally absent four fifths of his time in the government.*

No strangers from other countries make this a part of their travels; where they can expect to see nothing but scenes of misery and desolation.

Those who have the misfortune to be born here, have the least title to any considerable employment; to which they are seldom preferred, but upon a political consideration.

* Soon after this was written, a change in this particular took place; and the viceroy has since usually resided in Ireland, during the whole time of his government. N.

One third part of the rents of Ireland is spent in England; which, with the profit of employments, pensions, appeals, journies of pleasure or health, education at the inns of court and both universities, remittances at pleasure, the pay of all superior officers in the army, and other incidents, will amount to a full half of the income of the whole kingdom, all clear profit to England.

We are denied the liberty of coining gold, silver, or even copper. In the Isle of Man they coin their own silver; every petty prince, vassal to the emperor, can coin what money he pleases. And in this, as in most of the articles already mentioned, we are an exception to all other states or monarchies, that were ever known in the world.

As to the last, or fourteenth article, we take special care to act diametrically contrary to it in the whole course of our lives. Both sexes, but especially the women, despise and abhor to wear any of their own manufactures, even those which are better made than in other countries; particularly a sort of silk plaid, through which the workmen are forced to run a kind of gold thread that it may pass for Indian. Even ale and potatoes are imported from England, as well as corn; and our foreign trade is little more than importation of French wine, for which I am told we pay ready money.

Now, if all this be true (upon which I could easily enlarge) I should be glad to know, by what secret method it is, that we grow a rich and flourishing people, without liberty, trade, manufactures, inhabitants, money, or the privilege of coining; without industry, labour or improvement of land; and with more than half the rent and profits of the whole kingdom annually exported, for which we receive not a single farthing: and to make up all this, nothing worth mentioning, except the linen of the North, a trade casual, corrupted, and at mercy; and

some butter from Cork. If we do flourish, it must be against every law of nature and reason; like the thorn at Glastonbury, that blossoms in the midst of winter.

Let the worthy commissioners, who come from England, ride round the kingdom, and observe the face of nature, or the face of the natives; the improvement of the land; the thriving numerous plantations; the noble woods; the abundance and vicinity of country seats; the commodious farmers' houses and barns; the towns and villages, where every body is busy, and thriving with all kind of manufactures; the shops full of goods wrought to perfection, and filled with customers; the comfortable diet, and dress, and dwellings of the people; the vast number of ships in our harbours and docks, and shipwrights in our seaport towns; the roads crowded with carriers, laden with rich manufacturers; the perpetual concourse to and fro of pompous equipages.

With what envy and admiration would those gentlemen return from so delightful a progress? what glorious reports would they make when they went back to England?

But my heart is too heavy to continue this irony longer: for it is manifest, that whatever stranger took such a journey, would be apt to think himself travelling in Lapland or Ysland, rather than in a country so favoured by nature as ours, both in fruitfulness of soil and temperature of climate. The miserable dress, and diet, and dwelling of the people; the general desolation in most parts of the kingdom; the old seats of the nobility and gentry all in ruins, and no new ones in their stead; the families of farmers, who pay great rents, living in filth and nastiness upon buttermilk and potatoes, without a shoe or stocking to their feet, or a house so convenient as an English hog-sty to receive them. These indeed

may be comfortable sights to an English spectator; who comes for a short time, only to learn the language, and returns back to his own country, whither he finds all his wealth transmitted.

Nostra miseria magna est.

There is not one argument used to prove the riches of Ireland, which is not a logical demonstration of its poverty. The rise of our rents is sqeezed out of the very blood, and vitals, and clothes, and dwellings of the tenants, who live worse than English beggars. The lowness of interest, in all other countries a sign of wealth, is in us a proof of misery; there being no trade to employ any borrower. Hence alone comes the dearness of land, since the savers have no other way to lay out their money: hence the dearness of necessaries of life: because the tenants cannot afford to pay such extravagant rates for land (which they must take or go a begging) without raising the price of cattle, and of corn, although themselves should live upon chaff. Hence our increase of building in this city; because workmen have nothing to do but to employ one another, and one half of them are infallibly undone. Hence the daily increase of bankers, who may be a necessary evil in a trading country, but so ruinous in ours; who, for their private advantage, have sent away all our silver, and one third of our gold; so that within three years past the running cash of the nation, which was about five hundred thousand pounds, is now less than two, and must daily diminish, unless we have liberty to coin, as well as that important kingdom, the Isle of Man, and the meanest principality in the German empire, as I have before observed.

I have sometimes thought, that this paradox of the kingdom's growing rich, is chiefly owing to those worthy gentlemen the BANKERS; who except some custom-house officers, birds of passage, oppressive thrifty squires, and a few others who shall be nameless, are the only thriving people among us: and I have often wished, that a law were enacted to hang up half a dozen bankers every year, and thereby interpose, at least some short delay to the farther ruin of Ireland.

Ye are idle, ye are idle, answered Pharoah to the Israelites, when they complained to his majesty, that they were forced to make bricks without straw.

England enjoys every one of those advantages for enriching a nation, which I have above enumerated; and, into the bargain, a good million returned to them every year without labour or hazard, or one farthing value received on our side: but how long we shall be able to continue the payment, I am not under the least concern. One thing I know, that when the hen is starved to death, there will be no more golden eggs.

I think it a little unhospitable, and others may call it a subtle piece of malice, that because there may be a dozen families in this town, able to entertain their English friends in a generous manner at their tables, their guests upon their return to England shall report, that we wallow in riches and luxury.

Yet, I confess, I have known an hospital, where all the household officers grew rich; while the poor, for whose sake it was built, were almost starving for want of food and raiment.

To conclude; if Ireland be a rich and flourishing kingdom, its wealth and prosperity must be owing to certain causes, that are yet concealed from the whole race of mankind; and the effects are equally invisible.

We need not wonder at strangers, when they deliver such paradoxes; but a native and inhabitant of this kingdom, who gives the same verdict, must be either ignorant to stupidity, or a manpleaser at the expense of all honour, conscience, and truth.

THE STORY

OF

AN INJURED LADY;

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,

IN A LETTER TO HER FRIEND.

WITH HIS ANSWER.

SIR,

BEING ruined by the inconstancy and unkindness of a lover, I hope a true and plain relation of my misfortunes may be of use and warning to credulous maids, never to put too much trust in deceitful man.

A gentleman* in the neighbourhood had two mistresses, another and myself;† and he pretended honourable love to us both. Our three houses stood pretty near one another; his was parted from mine by a river,‡ and from my rival's by an old broken wall.‖ But before I enter into the particulars of this gentleman's hard usage of me, I will give a very just and impartial character of my rival and myself.

As to her person, she is tall and lean, and very ill shaped; she has bad features, and a worse complexion

* England. H.
† Scotland and Ireland. H.
‡ The Irish sea. H.
‖ The Picts wall. H.

she has a stinking breath, and twenty ill smells about her besides; which are yet more unsufferable by her natural sluttishness; for she is always lousy, and never without the itch. As to her other qualities, she has no reputation either for virtue, honesty, truth, or manners; and it is no wonder, considering what her education has been. Scolding and cursing are her common conversation. To sum up all; she is poor and beggarly, and gets a sorry maintenance by pilfering wherever she comes. As for this gentleman, who is now so fond of her, she still bears him an invincible hatred; reviles him to his face, and rails at him in all companies. Her house is frequented by a company of rogues, and thieves, and pickpockets, whom she encourages to rob his henroosts, steal his corn and cattle, and do him all manner of mischief. She has been known to come at the head of these rascals, and beat her lover until he was sore from head to foot, and then force him to pay for the trouble she was at. Once attended with a crew of ragamuffins, she broke into his house, turned all things topsyturvy, and then set it on fire. At the same time she told so many lies among his servants, that it set them all by the ears, and his poor steward* was knocked on the head; for which I think, and so does all the country, that she ought to be answerable. To conclude her character; she is of a different religion, being a presbyterian of the most rank and violent kind, and consequently having an inveterate hatred to the church; yet I am sure, I have been always told, that in marriage there ought to be a union of minds as well as of persons.

I will now give my own character, and shall do it in few words, and with modesty and truth.

* Charles I. H.

I was reckoned to be as handsome as any in our neighbourhood, until I became pale and thin with grief and ill usage. I am still fair enough, and have, I think, no very ill feature about me. They that see me now will hardly allow me ever to have had any great share of beauty; for, beside being so much altered, I go always mobbed, and in an undress, as well out of neglect, as indeed for want of clothes to appear in. I might add to all this, that I was born to a good estate, although it now turns to little account under the oppressions I endure, and has been the true cause of all my misfortunes.

Some years ago, this gentleman, taking a fancy either to my person or fortune, made his addresses to me; which, being then young and foolish, I too readily admitted; he seemed to use me with so much tenderness, and his conversation was so very engaging, that all my constancy and virtue were too soon overcome: and to dwell no longer upon a theme that causes such bitter reflections, I must confess with shame, that I was undone by the common arts practised upon all easy credulous virgins, half by force, and half by consent, after solemn vows and protestations of marriage. When he had once got possession, he soon began to play the usual part of a too fortunate lover, affecting on all occasions to show his authority, and to act like a conqueror. First, he found fault with the government of my family, which I grant was none of the best, consisting of ignorant illiterate creatures; for at that time I knew but little of the world. In compliance to him, therefore, I agreed to fall into his ways and methods of living; I consented that his steward should govern my house, and have liberty to employ an under steward,* who should receive his directions.

* The lord lieutenant. H.

My lover proceeded farther, turned away several old servants and tenants, and supplying me with others from his own house, these grew so domineering and unreasonable, that there was no quiet, and I heard of nothing but perpetual quarrels, which although I could not possibly help, yet my lover laid all the blame and punishment upon me; and upon every falling out, still turned away more of my people, and supplied me in their stead with a number of fellows and dependants of his own, whom he had no other way to provide for. Overcome by love, and to avoid noise and contention, I yielded to all his usurpations; and finding it in vain to resist, I thought it my best policy to make my court to my new servants, and draw them to my interests: I fed them from my own table with the best I had, put my new tenants on the choice parts of my land, and treated them all so kindly, that they began to love me as well as their master. In process of time all my old servants were gone, and I had not a creature about me, nor above one or two tenants but what were of his choosing; yet I had the good luck by gentle usage to bring over the greatest part of them to my side. When my lover observed this, he began to alter his language; and to those who inquired about me, he would answer, that I was an old dependant upon his family, whom he had placed on some concerns of his own; and he began to use me accordingly, neglecting by degrees all common civility in his behaviour. I shall never forget the speech he made me one morning, which he delivered with all the gravity in the world. He put me in mind of the vast obligations I lay under to him in sending me so many of his people for my own good, and to teach me manners: that it had cost him ten times more than I was worth to maintain me: that it had been much better for him if I had been damned, or burnt, or sunk to the bottom of the sea: that it was rea-

sonable I should strain myself as far as I was able to reimburse him some of his charges; that from henceforward he expected his word should be a law to me in all things: that I must maintain a parish watch against thieves and robbers, and give salaries to an overseer, a constable, and others, all of his own choosing, whom he would send from time to time to be spies upon me: that to enable me the better in supporting these expenses, my tenants should be obliged to carry all their goods cross the river to his own town market, and pay toll on both sides, and then sell them at half value. But because we were a nasty sort of people, and that he could not endure to touch any thing we had a hand in, and likewise, because he wanted work to employ his own folks, therefore we must send all our goods to his market just in their naturals; the milk immediately from the cow, without making it into cheese or butter; the corn in the ear; the grass as it is mowed; the wool as it comes from the sheep's back; and bring the fruit upon the branch, that he might not be obliged to eat it after our filthy hands; that if a tenant carried but a piece of bread and cheese to eat by the way, or an inch of worsted to mend his stockings, he should forfeit his whole parcel: and because a company of rogues usually plyed on the river between us, who often robbed my tenants of their goods and boats, he ordered a waterman of his to guard them, whose manner was to be out of the way until the poor wretches were plundered; then to overtake the thieves, and seize all as a lawful prize to his master and himself. It would be endless to repeat a hundred other hardships he has put upon me; but it is a general rule, that whenever he imagines the smallest advantage will redound to one of his footboys by any new oppression of me and my whole family and estate, he never disputes it a moment. All this has rendered me so very insignificant and con-

temptible at home, that some servants, to whom I pay the greatest wages, and many tenants, who have the most beneficial leases, are gone over to live with him; yet I am bound to continue their wages, and pay their rents; by which means one third part of my whole income is spent on his estate, and above another third by his tolls and markets; and my poor tenants are so sunk and impoverished, that instead of maintaining me suitably to my quality, they can hardly find me clothes to keep me warm, or provide the common necessaries of life for themselves.

Matters being in this posture between me and my lover; I received intelligence that he had been for some time making very pressing overtures of marriage to my rival, until there happened some misunderstandings between them; she gave him ill words, and threatened to break off all commerce with him. He, on the other side, having either acquired courage by his triumphs over me, or supposing her as tame a fool as I, thought at first to carry it with a high hand; but hearing at the same time, that she had thoughts of making some private proposals to join with me against him, and doubting with very good reason, that I would readily accept them, he seemed very much disconcerted. This I thought was a proper occasion to show some great example of generosity and love; and so without farther consideration, I sent him word, that hearing there was likely to be a quarrel between him and my rival, notwithstanding all that had passed, and without binding him to any conditions in my own favour, I would stand by him against her and all the world, while I had a penny in my purse, or a petticoat to pawn. This message was subscribed by all my chief tenants; and proved so powerful, that my rival immediately grew more tractable upon it. The result of which was, that there is now a treaty of mar-

riage* concluded between them, the wedding clothes are bought, and nothing remains but to perform the ceremony, which is put off for some days, because they design it to be a public wedding. And to reward my love, constancy, and generosity, he has bestowed on me the office of being sempstress to his grooms and footmen, which I am forced to accept or starve. Yet in the midst of this my situation, I cannot but have some pity for this deluded man, to cast himself away on an infamous creature, who, whatever she pretends, I can prove would at this very minute rather be a whore to a certain great man, that shall be nameless, if she might have her will. For my part I think, and so does all the country too, that the man is possessed; at least none of us are able to imagine what he can possibly see in her, unless she has bewitched him, or given him some powder.

I am sure I never sought this alliance, and you can bear me witness, that I might have had other matches; nay, if I were lightly disposed, I could still perhaps have offers, that some, who hold their heads higher, would be glad to accept. But alas! I never had any such wicked thought; all I now desire is, only to enjoy a little quiet, to be free from the persecutions of this unreasonable man, and that he will let me manage my own little fortune to the best advantage; for which I will undertake to pay him a considerable pension every year, much more considerable than what he now gets by his oppressions; for he must needs find himself a loser at last, when he has drained me and my tenants so dry, that we shall not have a penny for him or ourselves. There is one imposition of his I had almost forgot, which I think unsufferable, and will appeal to you or any reasonable person, whether it be so or not. I told you be-

* Treaty of Union. H.

fore, that by an old compact we agreed to have the same steward; at which time I consented likewise to regulate my family and estate by the same method with him, which he then showed me written down in form, and I approved of. Now, the turn he thinks fit to give this compact of ours is very extraordinary; for he pretends, that whatever orders he shall think fit to prescribe for the future in his family, he may, if he will, compel mine to observe them without asking my advice, or hearing my reasons. So that I must not make a lease without his consent, or give any directions for the well governing of my family, but what he countermands whenever he pleases. This leaves me at such confusion and uncertainty, that my servants know not when to obey me; and my tenants, although many of them be very well inclined, seem quite at a loss.

But I am too tedious upon this melancholy subject, which however I hope you will forgive, since the happiness of my whole life depends upon it. I desire you will think awhile, and give your best advice, what measures I shall take with prudence, justice, courage, and honour, to protect my liberty and fortune against the hardships and severities I lie under from that unkind, inconstant man.

ANSWER TO THE INJURED LADY.

MADAM,

I have received your ladyship's letter, and carefully considered every part of it, and shall give you my opinion how you ought to proceed for your own securi-

ty. But first I must beg leave to tell your ladyship, that you were guilty of an unpardonable weakness the other day, in making that offer to your lover of standing by him in any quarrel he might have with your rival. You know very well, that she began to apprehend he had designs of using her as he had done you; and common prudence might have directed you rather to have entered into some measures with her for joining against him, until he might at least be brought to some reasonable terms: but your invincible hatred to that lady, has carried your resentments so high, as to be the cause of your ruin; yet if you please to consider, this aversion of yours began a good while before she became your rival, and was taken up by you and your family in a sort of compliment to your lover, who formerly had a great abhorrence of her. It is true, since that time you have suffered very much by her encroachments upon your estate, but she never pretended to govern and direct you; and now you have drawn a new enemy upon yourself; for I think you may count upon all the ill offices she can possibly do you by her credit with her husband; whereas, if instead of openly declaring against her without any provocation, you had but sat still a while, and said nothing, that gentleman would have lessened his severity to you out of perfect fear. This weakness of yours you call generosity; but I doubt there was more in the matter: in short, madam, I have good reasons to think you were betrayed to it by the pernicious counsel of some about you: for to my certain knowledge, several of your tenants and servants, to whom you have been very kind, are as arrant rascals as any in the country. I cannot but observe what a mighty difference there is, in one particular, between your ladyship and your rival. Having yielded up your person, you thought nothing else worth defending, and therefore

you will not now insist upon those very conditions, for which you yielded at first. But your ladyship cannot be ignorant, that some years since, your rival did the same thing, and upon no conditions at all; nay, this gentleman kept her as a miss, and yet made her pay for her diet and lodging. But, it being at a time when he had no steward, and his family out of order, she stole away, and has now got the trick very well known among the women of the town, to grant a man the favour over night, and the next day have the impudence to deny it to his face. But it is too late to reproach you with any former oversights, which cannot now be rectified. I know the matters of fact, as you relate them, are true and fairly represented. My advice therefore is this: get your tenants together as soon as you conveniently can, and make them agree to the following resolutions:

First. That your family and tenants have no dependence upon the said gentleman, farther than by the old agreement, which obliges you to have the same steward, and to regulate your household by such methods as you should both agree to.

Secondly. That you will not carry your goods to the market of his town, unless you please, nor be hindered from carrying them any where else.

Thirdly. That the servants you pay wages to shall live at home, or forfeit their places.

Fourthly. That whatever lease you make to a tenant, it shall not be in his power to break it.

If he will agree to these articles, I advise you to contribute as largely as you can to all charges of parish and county.

I can assure you, several of that gentleman's ablest tenants and servants are against his severe usage of you, and would be glad of an occasion to convince

the rest of their error, if you will not be wanting to yourself.

If the gentleman refuses these just and reasonable offers, pray let me know it, and perhaps I may think of something else that will be more effectual.

I am, Madam,

Your ladyship's, &c.

ON

BARBAROUS DENOMINATIONS

IN IRELAND.

1728.

SIR,

I HAVE been lately looking over the advertisements in some of your Dublin newspapers, which are sent me to the country; and was much entertained with a large list of denominations of lands, to be sold or let. I am confident they must be genuine; for it is impossible that either chance, or modern invention, could sort the alphabet in such a manner, as to make those abominable sounds; whether first invented to invoke or fright away the devil, I must leave among the curious.

If I could wonder at any thing barbarous, ridiculous, or absurd among us, this should be one of the first. I have often lamented that Agricola, the father-in-law of Tacitus, was not prevailed on by that petty king from Ireland, who followed his camp, to come over and civilize us with a conquest, as his countrymen did Britain, where several Roman appellations remain to this day; and so would the rest have done, if that inundation of

Angles, Saxons, and other northern people, had not changed them so much for the worse, although in no comparison with ours. In one of the advertisements just mentioned, I encountered near a hundred words together, which I defy any creature in human shape, except an Irishman of the savage kind, to pronounce; neither would I undertake such a task, to be owner of the lands, unless I had liberty to humanize the syllables twenty miles round. The legislature may think what they please, and that they are above copying the Romans in all their conquests of barbarous nations; but I am deceived, if any thing has more contributed to prevent the Irish from being tamed, than this encouragement of their language, which might be easily abolished and become a dead one in half an age, with little expense, and less trouble.

How is it possible that a gentleman, who lives in those parts where the *town-lands* (as they call them) of his estate produce such odious sounds from the mouth, the throat, and the nose, can be able to repeat the words without dislocating every muscle that is used in speaking, and without applying the same tone to all other words, in every language he understands: as it is plainly to be observed, not only in those people, of the better sort, who live in Gallway and the western parts, but in most counties of Ireland?

It is true, that in the city parts of London, the trading people have an affected manner of pronouncing; and so, in my time, had many ladies and coxcombs at court. It is likewise true, that there is an odd provincial cant in most counties in England, sometimes not very pleasing to the ear: and the Scotch cadence, as well as expression, are offensive enough. But none of these defects derive contempt to the speaker: whereas,

what we call the *Irish brogue*, is no sooner discovered, than it makes the deliverer, in the last degree, ridiculous and despised; and, from such a mouth, an Englishman expects nothing but bulls, blunders, and follies. Neither does it avail whether the censure be reasonable or not, since the fact is always so. And, what is yet worse, it is too well known, that the bad consequence of this opinion affects those among us who are not the least liable to such reproaches, farther than the misfortune of being born in Ireland, although of English parents, and whose education has been chiefly in that kingdom.

I have heard many gentlemen among us talk much of the great convenience to those who live in the country, that they should speak Irish. It may possibly be so: but, I think, they should be such who never intend to visit England, upon pain of being ridiculous; for I do not remember to have heard of any one man that spoke Irish, who had not the accent upon his tongue easily discernable to any English ear.

But I have wandered a little from my subject, which was only to propose a wish that these execrable denominations were a little better suited to an English mouth, if it were only for the sake of the English lawyers; who, in trials upon appeals to the house of lords, find so much difficulty in repeating the names, that if the plaintiff or defendant were by, they would never be able to discover which were their own lands. But, beside this, I would desire, not only that the appellations of what they call *town-lands* were changed, but likewise of larger districts, and several towns, and some counties; and particularly the seats of country gentlemen, leaving an *alias* to solve all difficulties in point of law. But I would by no means trust these alterations to the owners themselves,

who, as they are generally no great clerks, so they seem to have no large vocabulary about them, nor to be well skilled in prosody. The utmost extent of their genius lies in naming their country habitation by a hill, a mount, a brook, a burrow, a castle, a bawn, a ford, and the like ingenious conceits. Yet these are exceeded by others, whereof some have continued anagramatical appellations, from half their own and their wives' names joined together: others only from the lady; as, for instance, a person, whose wife's name was Elizabeth, calls his seat by the name of *Bess-borow*. There is likewise a famous town, where the worst iron in the kingdom is made, and it is called *Swandlingbar*. The original of which name I shall explain, lest the antiquaries of future ages might be at a loss to derive it. It was a most witty conceit of four gentlemen, who ruined themselves with this Iron project. *Sw.* stands for *Swift*, *And.* for *Sanders*, *Ling.* for *Darling*, and *Bar.* for *Barry*. Methinks I see the four loggerheads, sitting in consult, like *Smectymnuus*, each gravely contributing a part of his own name, to make up one for their place in the iron work; and could wish they had been hanged, as well as undone, for their wit. But I was most pleased with the denomination of a town-land, which I lately saw in an advertisement of Pue's paper: "This is to give notice, that the lands of *Douras*, *alias* WHIG-*Borough*, &c." Now this zealous proprietor, having a mind to record his principles in religion or loyalty to future ages, within five miles round him, for want of other merit, thought fit to make use of this expedient; wherein he seems to mistake his account: for this distinguishing term whig had a most infamous original, denoting a man who favoured the fanatic sect, and an enemy to kings, and so continued till the idea was a little softened, some years

after the revolution, and during a part of her late majesty's reign. After which it was in disgrace until the queen's death, since which time it has indeed flourished with a witness: but how long it will continue so, in our variable scene, or what kind of mortal it may describe, is a question which this courtly landlord is not able to answer. And therefore he should have set a date on the title of his borough, to let us know what kind of creature a whig was in that year of our Lord. I would readily assist nomenclators of this costive imagination; and therefore, I propose, to others of the same size in thinking, that, when they are at a loss about christening a country seat, instead of straining their invention, they would call it *Booby-borough*, *Fool-brook*, *Puppy-ford*, *Coxcomb-hall*, *Mount-loggerhead*, *Dunce-hill*; which are innocent appellations, proper to express the talents of the owners. But I cannot reconcile myself to the prudence of this lord of WHIG-*borough*, because I have not yet heard, among the presbyterian squires, how much soever their persons and principles are in vogue, that any of them have distinguished their country abode by the name of *Mount-regicide*, *Covenant-hall*, *Fanatic-hill*, *Round-head-bawn*, *Canting-brook*, or *Mount-rebel*, and the like: because there may probably come a time when those kind of sounds may not be so grateful to the ears of the kingdom. For I do not conceive it would be a mark of discretion, upon supposing a gentleman, in allusion to his name, or the merit of his ancestors, to call his house *Tyburn-hall*.

But the scheme I would propose, for changing the denominations of land into legible and audible syllables, is by employing some gentlemen in the university; who, by the knowledge of the Latin tongue, and their judgment in sounds, might imitate the Roman way,

by translating those hideous words into their English meanings, and altering the termination where a bare translation will not form a good cadence to the ear, or be easily delivered from the mouth. And when both these means happen to fail, then to name the parcels of land from the nature of the soil, or some peculiar circumstance belonging to it; as, in England, *Farn-ham*, *Oat-lands*, *Black-heath*, *Corn-bury*, *Rye-gate*, *Ash-burnham*, *Barn-elms*, *Cole-orton*, *Sand-wich*, and many others.

I am likewise apt to quarrel with some titles of lords among us, that have a very ungracious sound, which are apt to communicate mean ideas to those who have not the honour to be acquainted with their persons or their virtues, of whom I have the misfortune to be one. But I cannot pardon those gentlemen, who have gotten titles since the judicature of the peers among us has been taken away, to which they all submitted with a resignation that became good Christians, as undoubtedly they are. However, since that time, I look upon a graceful harmonious title to be at least forty *per cent.* in the value intrinsic of an Irish peerage: and, since it is as cheap as the worst, for any Irish law hitherto enacted in England to the contrary, I would advise the next set, before they pass their patents, to call a consultation of scholars and musical gentlemen, to adjust this most important and essential circumstance. The Scotch noblemen, though born almost under the north pole, have much more tunable appellations, except some very few, which I suppose, were given them by the Irish, along with their language, at the time when that kingdom was conquered and planted from hence; and, to this day, retain the denominations of place, and surnames of families, as all historians agree.

I should likewise not be sorry, if the names of some bishops sees were so much obliged to the alphabet, that upon pronouncing them, we might contract some veneration for the order and persons of those reverend peers, which the gross ideas sometimes joined to their titles are very unjustly apt to diminish.

SHORT REMARKS

ON

BISHOP BURNET'S HISTORY.

THIS author is in most particulars the worst qualified for an historian that ever I met with. His style is rough, full of improprieties, in expressions often Scotch, and often such as are used by the meanest people.* He discovers a great scarcity of words and phrases, by repeating the same several hundred times, for want of capacity to vary them. His observations are mean and trite, and very often false. His Secret History is generally made up of coffeehouse scandals, or at best from reports at the third, fourth, or fifth hand. The account of the pretender's birth, would only become an old woman in a chimney-corner. His vanity runs intolerably through the whole book, affecting to have been of consequence at nine-

* His own opinion, however, was very different, as appears by the original MS. of his History, wherein the following lines are legible, though among those which were ordered not to be printed: "And if I have arrived at any faculty of writing clear and correctly, I owe that entirely to them [Tillotson and Lloyd;] for as they joined with Wilkins in that noble though despised attempt of an Universal Character, and a Philosophical Language, they took great pains to observe all the common errors of language in general, and of ours in particular. And in drawing the tables for that work, which was Lloyd's province, he looked farther into a natural purity and simplicity of style, than any man I ever knew. Into all which he led me, and so helped me to any measure of exactness of writing, which may be thought to belong to me." The above was originally designed to have followed the words "I knew from them," vol. i, p. 191, l. 7, fol. ed. near the end of A. D. 1661. N.

teen years old, and while he was a little Scotch parson of 40 pounds a year. He was a gentleman born, and in the time of his youth and vigour, drew in an old maiden daughter of a Scotch earl to marry him. His characters are miserably wrought, in many things mistaken, and all of them detracting,* except of those who were friends to the presbyterians. That early love of liberty he boasts of is absolutely false; for the first book that I believe he ever published, is an entire treatise in favour of passive obedience and absolute power; so that his reflections on the clergy, for asserting, and then changing those principles, come very improperly from him. He is the most partial of all writers that ever pretended so much to impartiality; and yet I, who knew him well, am convinced that he is as impartial as he could possibly find in his heart; I am sure more than I ever expected from him; particularly in his account of the papist and fanatic plots. This work may be more properly called, A History of Scotland during the author's time, with some digressions relating to England, rather than deserve the title he gives it. For I believe two thirds of it relate only to that beggarly nation, and their insignificant brangles and factions. What he succeeds best in is in giving extracts of arguments and debates in council or parliament. Nothing recommends his book but the recency of the facts he mentions, most of them being still in me-

* Many of which were stricken through with his own hand, but left legible in the MS.; which he ordered in his last will, "his executor to print faithfully as he left it, without adding, suppressing, or altering it in any particular." In the second volume, judge Burnet, the bishop's son and executor, promises that "the original manuscript of both volumes shall be deposited in the Cotton Library." But this promise does not appear to have been fulfilled; at least it certainly was not in 1736, when Two Letters were printed, addressed to Thomas Burnet, Esq. In p. 8 of the second letter, the writer asserted, that he had in his own possession "an authentic and complete collection of the castrated passages." N.

mory, especially the story of the Revolution; which, however, is not so well told as might be expected from one who affects to have had so considerable a share in it. After all, he was a man of generosity and good nature, and very communicative; but, in his ten last years, was absolutely party-mad, and fancied he saw popery under every bush. He has told me many passages not mentioned in this history, and many that are, but with several circumstances suppressed or altered. He never gives a good character without one essential point, that the person was tender to dissenters, and thought many things in the church ought to be amended.

Setting up for a maxim, Laying down for a maxim, Clapt up, and some other words and phrases, he uses many hundred times.

Cut out for a Court, a pardoning planet, Clapt up, Left in the lurch, The Mob, Outed, A great beauty, Went roundly to Work: All these phrases used by the vulgar, show him to have kept mean or illiterate company in his youth.

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